

Resources

A Day At A Time is a AIDS newsletter from Richard Rhodes in Leavenworth prison. It combines specific information on AIDS, legal updates, and common sense about how to survive with AIDS in prison. Subscriptions are free. Write to:

Richard Rhodes #05353-018
P.O. Box 1000
Leavenworth, KS 66048

Bars and Stripes is the newsletter of the Criminal Justice Ministries & Hansen House of Hospitality in Des Moines, Iowa. There are reports from within and about Iowa prisons. The August '92 issue had several articles that were very insightful about some of the critical issues around crime and punishment. No subscription rate is included, but non-prisoners should send a donation. Write:

Criminal Justice Ministries
Box 70033
Des Moines IA 50311

The Black Connection is both a newsletter and an organizing network for uniting the black man and the black woman in love and understanding. The publication is distributed nationally to churches with women's clubs, and other black women organizations who desire to correspond with black males who are incarcerated. The publication is dedicated to saving and restructuring the black family. It also carries a Black Male Classified Section for prisoners to put personal ads in. The fee is \$10.00 for one 30-word classified ad. The newsletter is free. Prisoners can send check or money order to:

Awareness Publications
c/o Ann Pritchard
Department PSC1092
398 Charter Oak Dr., SW
Atlanta, GA 30331

Equal Justice: USA: A Look at the Reality is a Human Rights Monitor produced by the Quixote Center in Maryland. They focus on the Human Rights abuses in American prisons and the Justice system. We recommend their July 1992 issue which has an extensive analysis of the recent Supreme Court decisions. They have back copies for sale at bulk rates: \$1 for 1-5 copies, 60 cents for 25 or more. Subs are free to prisoners, others should send in a donation. Write:

Equal Justice USA
P.O. Box 5206
Hyattsville, MD 20782

The Prisoner's Literature Project works out of Bound Together Books in San Francisco. It is a voluntary project that sends books and publications to prisoners. Everything is donated, including the books and money for

postage. They asked us to give the following tips on so that requests can be processed quickly and efficiently. A recent grant from Resist will help them catch up with their backlog of requests. They ask for your patience since they process hundreds of requests a year.

1 - Let them know what the restrictions are in your prison for receiving publications. Can you receive hardcover books? Used books? Magazines? It is *very* important to let them know.

2 - Please *specify* the subject area of your request. They can't necessarily provide you with a certain title. Let them know what kinds of things you want to read about.

3 - They do not have legal resource materials. They are extremely expensive and unfortunately, very difficult to obtain as donations.

4 - They can't do pen-pal correspondence due to the enormous volume of mail.

5 - All books are free for prisoners.

6 - When ordering, please print all information such as prisoners ID # and address legibly.

Contact them at:

Prisoners' Literature Program
Bound Together Books
1369 Haight St.
San Francisco, CA 94117

No Longer Barred From Prison is the fourth printing of this classic work on prisons and alternatives to them written by Claire Culhane, Canada's premier anti-prison activist. It details the now successful fight by Culhane to recover her visitation rights to federal prisons in British Columbia. An excellent work for anyone, inside or out, wanting some direction on how to become more effective at bringing the prison systems to a halt. It includes a "Do-It-Yourself" manual for families and friends of prisoners. Cost is \$3.00 for prisoners, \$16.95 for others. Write:

Black Rose Books
3981 St. Laurent
Montreal, Quebec H2W 1Y5

The Affiliate is a both a magazine and a network. As a magazine it has articles from prisoners, but it also focuses on the naturalist (nudist) movement. As a network it "as the preferential tool to link all positive units world wide". Each issue lists individuals and groups worldwide. It is free to prisoners. For others the single issue cost is \$5.00, with a yearly participation fee of \$50.00, which allows for discounts on other network activities. Write to:

The Affiliate
c/o Peter Ridden
777 Barb Hill Rd. R.R. #1
Vankleek Hill, Ont K0B 1R0

The new issue of *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* is out. This book-like periodical takes an academic (this is a description, not a criticism) approach to prisons. This time the focus is on education in prisons, with the writers generally having both a practical experience of, and a theoretical understanding of, how education works within prisons. Subs are \$4.00 for prisoners, \$7.00 for low income, \$10.00 for others, \$20.00 for institutions. Write:

Journal of Prisoners on Prisons
P.O. Box 60779
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2S9

Queer Press is Canada's only press specifically for lesbians and gay men. They will donate 3% of each press run to prisoners and psychiatric inmates. They have published one book called *Loving in Fear* which is an anthology of works by lesbian and gay survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Q. Press
P.O. Box 485, Station P
Toronto, ON M5S 2T1

Disabled Dyke Anthology — call for submissions

There is a lack of writing which articulates our perspectives, experiences, and oppression as Dykes with disabilities. There is also a lack of cultural imagery which depicts our bodies, pleasures, etc. This pathbreaking anthology will begin to change that.

Dykes with disabilities of all kinds, including environmental sensitivity, HIV/AIDS, and other chronic illnesses, are invited to submit their poetry, essays, drawings, stories, and so on.

Disabled Asian, South Asian, and Latina dykes, and dykes of Afrikan descent with disabilities are encouraged to contribute their creative work. We also want to encourage disabled two-spirited women/lesbians who are incarcerated in prisons, and psychiatric institutions to submit to this anthology.

Work may be submitted either in print form, or on tape. Do not send originals. Submissions cannot be returned. Deadline for submissions is February 1, 1993. For more information, or to make submissions, write:

D.D.A.
P.O. Box 41
4700 Keele St.
North York, Ont M3J 1P3

Prison News Service

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Simon Paul Dene © 92

RACIST BRUTALITY AND RESISTANCE
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Resistance at FMC Lexington, August 1992

On 12-14/Aug, the first sustained act of resistance by women prisoners in the us. federal prison system in twenty years took place.

Here's what happened:

On Wednesday night, 12/Aug, there was an argument between two prisoners in the central yard area ("Central Park") at about 8:30 p.m. It was over quickly and everyone was walking away, towards the housing units, because we have to be inside at 9 p.m. A lieutenant came running to see what had happened - pulling on his black leather gloves. He yelled, "Hey, you! Stop!" When no one stopped he grabbed the first Black woman he saw, lifted her in the air, and body-slammed her to the ground. Other women yelled at him, saying she wasn't even involved in the argument, but he kept on attacking her - putting his knee in the back of her neck and smashing her face to the pavement. He pulled her hands behind her back, cuffed her, dragged her to her feet, and another guard took her to the lieutenant's office.

This was witnessed by about one hundred women. They were all very upset by it, and gathered to talk to the Captain. At 9 p.m., all but about fifteen returned to their housing units, after being assured that the beaten woman would be released back into general population, and that a thorough investigation would be undertaken.

But on Thursday morning it turned out the woman had not been released, and some of the women who had witnessed the incident had been put in the hole ("segregation") as well. Despite the promise of an investigation, by 3 p.m. prisoners were told that the investigation was completed, and no further statements would be taken.

This was not the first instance of physical brutality at Lexington - nor, certainly of racism. The male guards have been putting their hands on us more and more - both in frequent pat searches and whenever they want us to move, to stop, or whatever. This particular lieutenant had threatened several women with brutality. The normally high level of racism had also recently heightened, following the Los Angeles verdict and the uprisings there. Several Black women who had complained of prejudice had been put in the hole for "inciting to riot".

But this time it all struck a nerve. On Thursday word traveled: don't go in at 4 p.m. (the major daily "standing count" throughout the Bureau of Prisons). Stay out in Central Park and demand the women be released from the hole - and the lieutenant suspended.

At 3:50 p.m., when the hourly "movement" began, the scene in Central Park was tense and exciting. Usually, it's rush hour -

1900 women, in the largest women's prison in the world, rushing to the units to try to get a few things done before the 4 p.m. count. On this Thursday, instead, it was like gridlock: everyone moved slowly, if at all, waiting to see what would happen.

At 4 p.m., an announcement ordered us all to go inside for count. Many did, but ninety of us stayed out, moving into the center of the Park. We sang Bob Marley's "Stand Up for Your Rights," and chanted "Stop Police Brutality," "We Want Justice," "Let Them Out of Seg," and "Figueroa (the lieutenant) Must Go." Ringed by guards - including a S.O.R.T. (SWAT) team in full regalia - we demanded to speak to the Captain. While we demonstrated we heard shouts of support from the windows of the housing units, and at least two "all available officers" codes to different units - meaning that the women who had returned to the units for count were doing some kind of support actions too.

We had to shout the Captain down, when he finally came to talk to us, because he was telling too many lies. He finally said the lieutenant would be back at work on Monday, and we all knew there was no point in any further discussion. We were handcuffed and escorted to seg - most of us being taken to the old High Security Unit, which has been out of use almost entirely since the BOP was forced to close it in 1988. Seven women to a cell, no blankets, no water - it was payback time.

The next day, twelve of us were taken out and chained up on a bus to Marianna, Florida (the new women's high security unit). As each of us was taken out of the prison, the whole place was locked down. But it was midday, so there were over 100 women in Central Park on their lunch breaks. As each of us was escorted through the Park, we were cheered - loudly, enthusiastically, joyfully - by everyone there.

I've since learned that while we were in

transit to Marianna, a smaller group of women repeated the action in Central Park at 4 p.m. on Friday. There were also quite a few small fires set in various housing units during the night. And a number of women were shipped out to Pleasanton after we twelve were shipped here to Marianna.

It was the first active resistance in a federal women's prison in the u.s. in twenty years.

For a few brief moments, we felt free. As we moved into Central Park, defying the daily, grinding regulations and control of prison life, we were liberated from the fear that holds prisoners in check. We had the power of justice on our side - and in our eyes as we looked at one another.

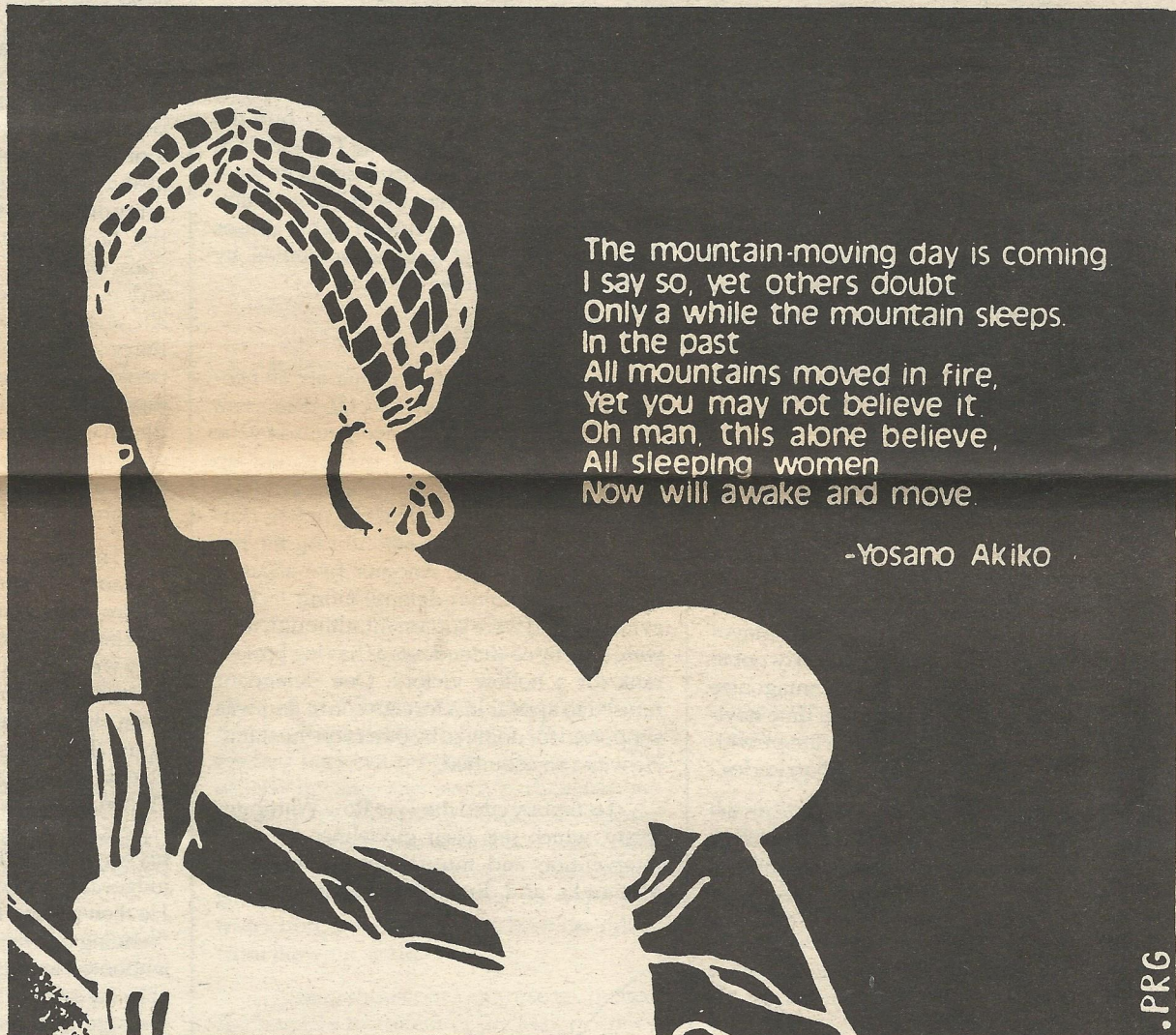
The most common thing you hear people say at Lexington is: "If the men (prisoners - the place used to be co-ed) were here, the police wouldn't get away with this. Women don't stick together, so the prison can put anything they want on us."

We proved that's not true. The racism and brutality that go down every day just didn't go down on this day. We'd had enough, and we trusted and respected ourselves and one another enough to stand up together. The demonstration was international - inspired

primarily by Jamaican, Haitian and African-American women, it was joined by Latina women and some white women as well. It was clear, for once, that if the police could continue to attack Black women (as they do every day - for example, at any given time the hole holds more Black women than any other nationality), then no one would be safe.

Anger is a constant reality in prison, and the entire prison system is designed to ensure that such anger is turned inwards, destroying one's self-respect and humanity, instead of being turned outwards towards the system and the oppressors. It took courage to resist all that, in the context of the total control, abuse and disrespect of women that constitutes women's prison. We had to trust each other, that we would not be standing out there alone. As we looked around at one another, we knew our demonstration was a victory, no matter what punishment might follow. A small flame of power, sisterhood, and dignity had been rekindled.∞

Laura Whitehorn
#22432-037
PMB 7006 Shawnee
Marianna, FL 32447



The mountain-moving day is coming
I say so, yet others doubt
Only a while the mountain sleeps.
In the past
All mountains moved in fire,
Yet you may not believe it.
Oh man, this alone believe,
All sleeping women
Now will awake and move.

-Yosano Akiko

Hungerstrike in MCC is over

The hungerstrike in Indiana's Maximum Control Complex (MCC) at Westville, reported in the last issue of *PNS*, is over. Prisoners went from 3 to 50 days without food to protest the brutal treatment that they experience include sensory deprivation; physical abuse; being chained for hours or even days to their beds; being firehosed with cold water; being subjected to frigid temperatures; as well as the more usual maltreatments of the denial of mail, visitors, and medical and psychiatric treatment. At least one man is reported to have suffered kidney damage.

Outside supporters had a very successful demonstration on July 9th. One hundred and twenty-five people from Chicago and all over Indiana attended

the very militant and noisy gathering. Authorities, in response to the demo, locked down a lower security prison at Westville as well as the maximum security institution at Michigan City, twenty miles away. Hundreds of letters have been sent to the state governor and the Department of Corrections. Amnesty International sent a letter condemning the conditions at the prison. Five former guards have indicated that they would be willing to testify about the conditions inside the control unit in a class action suit brought by the prisoners in MCC and backed by the ACLU.

With the exposure of the atrocities, prisoners in MCC reported that the number of attacks on them had declined and that the temperature in their cells was closer to normal. No firehosings had been reported recently. But by mid-September, the tortuous

conditions that forced the prisoners to resort to hungerstrikes in protest were returning. Amidst all the clamor about the conditions in MCC, James Aiken resigned as the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections. No official link was made between the resignation and the clamor about the abuse of basic human rights in the MCC.

The struggle of prisoners inside the Indiana prison system is one of the most advanced on the continent. The prisoners have achieved a high degree of unity across race lines, between the various prisons in the state system. The response from the authorities is ever more repression. A new control unit with 500 cells, twice the size of the MCC, is being built in Sullivan County. These new torture cells will not be filled with the most violent and predatory prisoners, but will be reserved for the ones who are becoming politicized, especially those who show any ability to mobilize and organize against their oppression. The imposition of the lockdown

at Michigan City which is continuing, and an earlier one at the Pendleton "reformatory", could provide the explosion needed to "justify" the extremely repressive measures that have become daily operating procedures throughout the whole system. ∞

Letter of protest are still needed. Write to the new commissioner:

Christian DeBryun
Commissioner Department of Corrections
302 W. Washington, Rm E 334
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For more information:

People United Against MCC Violence
P.O. Box 25501

Chicago, IL 60625

See Box on page 2 for information about a fundraising poster

Sovereignty defense successful in Mohawk trial

After twenty-eight days of jury trial and five days of deliberation, all defendants were acquitted of charges stemming from the summer 1990 standoff at Kanehsatake (Oka), near Montreal.

Commenting on the jury's decision, the defendants stated:

"In our trial, we did not hide behind a criminal defense but admitted that we were there and did bear arms in defense of our land and our people. The verdict is seen by the Mohawks and their allies as an admission by the jury that the issues involving land and jurisdiction must be addressed not in the Criminal Courts but by negotiations on a Nation to Nation basis between the Canadian government and the Six Nations Confederacy. The jury understood that we were sincere in our efforts to reach a peaceful end to the conflict, despite the duplicitous and colonial attitudes of all levels of governments and attempts by police agencies to criminalize the situation."

Evidence presented during the trial showed clearly that the Mohawks have consistently asserted sovereignty and historically defended the area known as the Pines. Known as "common grounds", it contains a sacred burial area and is a collecting site for valuable traditional medicines. The Mohawk community of Kanehsatake was made aware of plans to expand one of nearby Oka's golf courses back in 1988, and the community organized to prevent the expansion from taking place. But by March 1990 their efforts were to no avail and developers were slated to start cutting trees. A golf-course expansion document notes that "the trees in the Pines will have a good market value once they are cut down to make way for the project." Plans included the removal of the ancestors' remains.

Mohawk women, children and men began to occupy the site with modest blockades, while attempting to continue negotiations with municipal and provincial officials. On July 9, the Quebec Minister of "Indian Affairs" John Caccia sent a letter to the Oka Mayor Jean Ouellette asking him very clearly not to act in any way that would further antagonize the Mohawk people. At the same time however, orders were being given to the provincial police (SQ) to dismantle the barricades.

On 11/July/90, the SQ SWAT team arrived in full combat gear and used automatic weapons, concussion grenades, smoke bombs and tear gas. In the shooting *melée* one of

their own was killed, probably by "friendly fire" – deducing from the fact that autopsy reports were never released and no charges ever brought. Thus began the 77-day armed standoff known as the Oka crisis.

By 1/Sept/90, the sympathy barricades in nearby Kahnawake, blocking the Mercier bridge into Montreal from the suburbs, had been dismantled through negotiations, but the Quebec and Canadian governments broke their word before the ink was dry. For 26 days the Kanehsatake resistance was holed up in the Treatment Centre (TC) building, surrounded by Canadian Armed Forces razor wire and the largest domestic troop deployment since 1885 – also against a Native rebellion – in Canada. At the army's disposal were 14 armoured vehicles, each mounted with two machine guns, a "heavy" machine gun and eight smoke grenade launchers. Each soldier carried a C-7 machine gun (automatic version of the M-16A2). Psychological warfare was paramount, trying without success to goad the Mohawks to fire upon the army. Various incidents such as the beating of a Mohawk man by four soldiers on "reconnaissance" and a raid claiming to search for weapons at the Kahnawake Longhouse (comparable to a mosque, church or temple) escalated tensions unbelievably: but the Mohawks and their allies in the TC held firm. Food, medicines and spiritual advisors were prevented from reaching the TC, in violation of signed agreements. Human rights abuses were duly recorded and never denied by army witnesses during the trial.

Trial strategy

On 26/Sept/90, approximately 60 people left the TC unarmed, and faced random brutality from troops caught off guard by the exit route. Of these, thirty-four ended up standing trial without recourse to criminal defense on charges of obstructing police, rioting and weapons possession during the period 1-26 September. Another five accused opted for a criminal defense citing lack of evidence, and were successful, although they were seen by co-defendants as having broken rank for a hollow victory. One defendant refused to appear in a foreign court, and was supported for doing so by others on the stand. He was also acquitted.

Testimony cited the Two Row Wampum treaty, which sets clear guidelines for non-intervention and mutual respect between Mohawks and European settlers. Ellen

Gabriel, a primary spokesperson during the 1990 crisis, presented her Mohawk passport (recognized in 17 countries) as her identification. Both her parents as well as numerous relatives are buried in the Pines cemetery. Hers and other testimony made clear that the women of the Mohawk Nation are the only rightful title holders because they are the caretakers of the land by traditional law, and they have never sold or ceded the land. The Band Council system of government is merely an administrative body forcibly imposed by the federal government. This testimony gave jurors an education, as did a reconvention of court in the Pines where they could see for themselves the beauty and peace of the sacred land. The long and fruitless negotiations preceding the July 11 invasion were made clear to the jury, and testimony relating to the spiritual nature of the resistance could be heard within the context of a political defense based on sovereignty. The definition of "Warrior" as someone who "carries the burden of Peace on his/her shoulders" with an obligation to defend the Nation, land, children and Iroquois Confederacy was heard repeatedly, with no apology or equivocation.

The prosecution was essentially unprepared for a political trial, and relied on media images of violent "Warriors" to fill the gaps in evidence. (At one point a Crown prosecutor suggested that the deceased SQ officer had been killed by bow and arrow.) They weakly, perhaps desperately, trotted out some 1912 British Privy Council decision which states that Mohawk land was granted to Sulpician priests by a French monarch who never set foot on the American continent. (The priests abandoned their settlement long ago.) The army officers all testified to being unaware of the land issue and insisted they were "peacekeepers" who were "just following orders." Video evidence showed the opposite, and no doubt destroyed the credibility of the prosecution. But for all its political unpreparedness, a crown attorney instructed the jury that to acquit would "send a message that in Canada you can settle a land issue out of court with weapons" which would "open the door to confusion, disorder and anarchy. Yes, anarchy." (Promise?)

The defense maintained that the defendants did not commit any of the alleged crimes and that no riot or unlawful assembly took place. Their actions were justified because they were defending land which is rightfully theirs and which was to be taken away from them. In his statements to the jury, Judge Louis Tannenbaum reminded the jury of Oneida spiritual advisor Bruce Elijah's words: "When the white man came across the great waters, he brought his laws, his religion and his ways, but he brought no land." A fact, the judge said, that he found hard to disagree with. He then refuted the crown's statement about "sending the wrong message", stating that this amounted to intimidation and was unacceptable. He said that if the jury was looking for a message then they should consider Caccia's July 9 letter to Ouellette. He then told the jury that if there was any reasonable doubt in their minds as to the guilt of the defendants they must acquit. And acquit they did.

The Mohawks and their supporters learned a great deal from the trial. As Joe David (an artist and TC defendant who prior to the summer of 1990 would not have picked up a weapon) remarked in a recent interview, "We learned it's up to us [to conduct a defense.] We can't rely on lawyers ... they are not prepared to do our political trials because we're not part of the Canadian system and that's how they are trained. The best we can do is present our history, have a jury trial, show them we've done this time and time again. As Native people, all our communities are under a state of siege, not just for months but for centuries. [In this context] the weapons charges are not relevant." He also says there is nothing he would do differently given a repeat of the same situation – and it appears that the state is prepared to do the same, judging from soldiers' testimony. However, in view of these acquittals, we should expect more sophisticated "counterinsurgency" planning from the start and more stringent attempts to criminalize participants in Native resistance movements. The mainstream press and politicians, when not ignoring the acquit-

tals, decried them – perhaps as an "excess of democracy". There were ("upon meticulous examination") no grounds for appeal of the acquittals, which the Quebec state claimed were "due to insufficient evidence."

Native sovereignty

Native sovereignty predates the existence of Canada and land "claim" cases in Canadian courts rest on consistent assertion of sovereignty throughout history. Christianity can be identified as a most reliable enemy – through residential schools and assimilationist policies – and most unreliable ally – little support came from churches in regards to any aspect of the Oka crisis.

As for costs, predictions of the defense costing \$3-million were overly pessimistic. The lawyer who was most able to take direction from the political defendants also turned out to have lower fees: the cost (for the 34 acquitted) is more like \$150,000. In their press release, the defendants add: "From the outset, the tremendous cost of this trial and other related trials, in terms of time and finances, to our Nation and the Canadian government, was not justifiable due to the political nature of the conflict. The fact remains that the issues related to the golf course and other developments in the Pines have not been settled. We interpret this acquittal as recognition by the jury of the real issues that arose during and because of the Mohawk Crisis of 1990. We wish to thank all the Nations from this Turtle Island who we know have used their medicines and prayers for the success of this trial." ∞

Sunday Harrison

Contributions can be made to:

The Akweks Defense Fund
c/o Canadian Rights and Liberties Federation,
323 Chapel St
Ottawa, Ont. K1N 7Z2

The persecution and prosecution of native people from the summer of 1990 has not ended. Many of the charges laid against Mohawk and other Native people at the barricades at Kahnawake have yet to be heard. The seizure of the bridge at Kahnawake, which forestalled a second attack on Kanehsatake, has made the state particularly anxious to put come down hard. Donations are needed to cover the costs of these trials as well. For information on the upcoming trials, or to contribute funds, write:

Liberation of the Mohawk Nation
c/o Mohawk Nation Office
Box 1987
Kahnawake, Quebec J0L 2B0

Prison News Radio is heard once every four weeks on CKLN 88.1 FM in Toronto. We have been doing this radio show for the last six months and are asking for help from interested Toronto readers in preparing and producing the 8-minute show. Contact us at Box 5052, Station A Toronto M4W 1W5

Fundraising poster for the struggle against MCC horrors

Political artist Diane Kast has drawn a poster that captures the horrors prisoners face daily in the Maximum Control Complex. Proceeds from the sale of the poster will go to supporting the struggle of the prisoners in MCC. The very strong posters are \$7.00 each, or \$5.00 for 10 or more. Write:

People United Against MCC Violence
P.O. Box 25501
Chicago, IL 60625



Aftermath of Montana prison riot — trials and tribulations

On September 22, 1991, prisoners in the Maximum Custody Unit in the State Prison at Deer Lodge, Montana were able to take advantage of lax security to take over their cellblock. With the guards fleeing to cover their own asses, some of the rioters used a fire to burn a hole through one of the polycarbonate-shielded (Lexan) control cages. Once there, they used the control consoles to release all the Max prisoners, also giving them access to the Protective Custody (P.C.) prisoners, five of whom were killed. But as anyone familiar with prisons would suspect, the murders of the 5 P.C. prisoners is only a small part of the story.

Fourteen prisoners initially faced charges of murder, kidnapping and burglary arising out of the uprising. The burglary charge was for the act of breaking through the control cage; kidnapping was laid because 5 guards on the unit locked themselves into a shower. As of this writing, six cases remain to go before the court. Of those that have been resolved, one man pled guilty to "mitigated homicide" which has a 40-year maximum. Two prisoners who turned state's evidence pled guilty with an expected sentence of 5 to 10 years. Two more pled guilty to riot-related charges, but not for the murders. Three men went to trial, two were convicted of all three charges, the third man was found guilty of murder and kidnapping but the burglary charge resulted in a hung jury, even though the other two charges only make sense if he had broken through the control cage.

All fourteen prisoners originally faced the death penalty, and technically speaking, the remaining six still do. But if a railroading was being planned, it was thrown off track by the participation in one of the preliminary trials by Mark Donatelli who was part of the defense team which defended the prisoners charged after the prison riot in New Mexico in 1981. New Mexico lost all one hundred and forty-four death penalty charges when the defense brought in expert witnesses on mob psychology and on the credibility of prison snitches. In that case, the defense was able to show how the conditions at the prison were contributing factors to the subsequent homicides. Donatelli offered to act as co-counsel for of the Max prisoners. None of the duty lawyers acting for the prisoners has taken him up on the offer. The state hasn't yet been willing to have the prison put on trial, so the death penalty was not at issue in any of the completed trials, but remains a potential threat to the ones remaining to be tried.

The prisoners were subdued after four hours. But as anyone familiar with prison riots well knows the violence was only beginning. To quote from an International Indian

Treaty Council (IITC) report: "Prisoners were instructed to strip and lie face down on the floor where they were handcuffed. Mace was used against them. They were forced to run barefoot through broken glass to reach the front door of the cell block, where they were met by a gauntlet of sixty to seventy armed guards. The guards struck the handcuffed inmates as they ran by, in some cases inflicting injuries requiring medical attention.

"The prisoners from the maximum security unit were then placed in an adjacent field called 'No Man's Land'. They were forced to lie there naked for many hours, sustaining sunburn on their backs and legs. They were taunted, beaten and kicked by guards. No hygienic measures were allowed, and inmates were forced to urinate or defecate where they lay. After approximately six to seven hours, they were taken to the "Reception" area of the prison where they were kept from September 22nd to October 15th."

Brutality

The IITC quoted from a list of the abuses to which the prisoners were subjected from a report by the ACLU. Many of them were corroborated in the official inquiry done under the sponsorship of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC):

1. The prisoners were left for four or five days without clothing or mattresses.
2. They were fed two meals a day, consisting of cold sandwiches; beverages were withheld." Nutrition was so bad that several prisoners developed scurvy.
3. They were denied hygiene items. No towels were distributed for at least four days. Showers were denied for three weeks.
4. Prisoner privileges were revoked and were not reinstated.
5. Access to telephones was denied, visits were prohibited, and correspondence was withheld.
6. Prisoners were denied access to legal materials and were prevented from contacting their attorneys for the entire three weeks that they remained in the Reception Unit.
7. Indian prisoners were prevented from practicing their religion. This included being prevented from attending sweat lodge ceremonies, being denied access to the sacred pipe and tobacco and also being prevented from speaking with a medicine man.
8. Prisoners were left chained without justification. This even applied to mentally handicapped prisoners.
9. Prisoners were subjected to mace attacks for refusal to talk with investigators from the Attorney General's Office.
10. Arbitrary and severely brutal punishment was inflicted on prisoners in the weeks immediately following the riot. Scott Seelye and five other prisoners were, in Seelye's words, hog tied in the brutal manner used against Viet Cong guerrillas during the American war in Indochina. This meant being chained in leg irons and handcuffs, with one leg being drawn up to the arms, resulting in their chest coming off the floor. They were left like this naked for two days on the cold concrete floor. Some of the prisoners suffered potentially permanent nerve damage.
11. Indian prisoners were singled out for the most brutal attacks. They were continually called the most racially derogatory terms.
12. They were denied medical examinations and treatments.

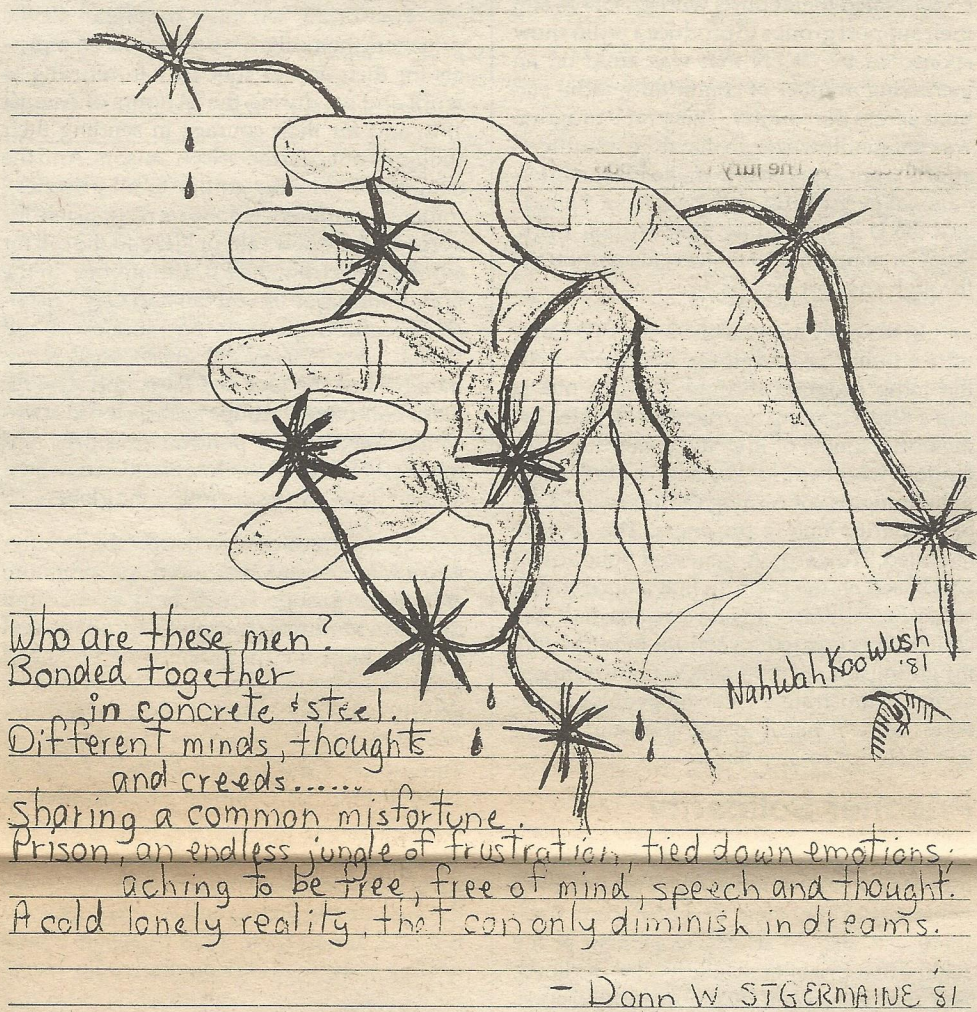
All the Max prisoners were subjected to these Nazi-style reprisals even though only a few of them actually participated in the riot. It matters little that many of these abuses were acknowledged by the Official Inquiry. A sergeant who abandoned his post at the beginning of the riot lost his stripes, and six other guards were suspended without pay for a

few days. No prison officials were reprimanded for their gross negligence in running the prison. The warden and associate warden observed the brutal treatment of the prisoners in "No Man's Land" and did nothing, but were never called for overseeing the guards' blood lust.

The prison authorities also took advantage of the riot to cut back programs throughout the prison, even though the other security classifications had nothing to do with the riot. Recreation was reduced for High Security prisoners from four-and-a-half hours a day to about 75 minutes. Some paid jobs were eliminated. Visiting for the High Security Unit was reduced from five days a week to three. School hours were reduced. Certain personal possessions which had formerly been

hang himself, but guards stood waiting outside his cell for forty-five minutes before cutting him down. And then they failed to make any effort to resuscitate the man.

According to the Max prisoners, the guards had been trying to instigate a riot in order to support their demands for hazardous duty pay. Earlier in the year, the guards had participated in a state-wide strike of state employees during which time the National Guard was brought in to run the prison. Several prisoners have signed affidavits attesting to the fact that guards had approached them, before, during and after the strike, and encouraged them to start something. There were also reports that the guards approached some of the National Guards who were in the prison during the strike, asking them to be as abusive



allowed, such as rugs and large containers of tobacco, were declared illegal. Many prisoners had personal property thrown out. The official investigators were particularly appalled that these changes would be imposed when the prison was so volatile. They asked for a special meeting with the prison administration to recommend that all these new restrictions be withdrawn to keep the prison from blowing again.

None of this should surprise us. Indeed, the horrible treatment of the Max prisoners after the riot differs only in degree and not in kind from the usual state of affairs in the prison. Racial slurs were common against Native and Chicano prisoners. Indian prisoners were denied the right to practice their religion. Max prisoners were allowed only one phone call a month, including legal calls. Hot food was served cold, and was not in adequate quantities. There were severe limitations on recreation and there were no programs. Prisoners were frequently beaten and physically abused.

According to the Official Inquiry, the Max, rather than simply being the highest security level in the prison, had functioned as a large segregation unit. There was no consistent criteria for prisoners being sent to Max, and no definite means by which prisoners could be released. Indeed, the unit functioned as a type of Control Unit, prisoners were confined to their cells 23 hours per day. There were attempts at "behavior modification", though it seems to have been no more sophisticated than beating a dog to ensure that it will heel on command.

The suicide of a native prisoner, Bill Brown, a month before the riot, crystallized the rage and frustration of the Max prisoners. Suicide is not really the right word. He did

as possible to the prisoners. This is a time-honoured negotiating tactic of prison guards.

What makes it even more credible is that it was well known that there would be a riot in the Max long before it actually took place. A number of Max prisoners reported this to counsellors, guards, and church sponsors. One prisoner was caught trying to pass off a piece of the Cyclone yard fence to an orderly for disposal. The prisoner was given a write-up, but otherwise nothing happened, though the piece of fencing could only have come from one of the yard cages which had been cut through for at least a month, but not noticed by the guards. Some of the PC prisoners were able to prepare defensible positions within their Pod in order to protect themselves for the riot they knew was coming. Yet nothing was done to prevent what had become an inevitability.

P.C. provocation

A constant provocation to the Max prisoners was the placing of PC prisoners in one Pod of the Max unit. These informers and rats, including a man about to testify against two of the Max prisoners regarding an earlier killing in the prison, were used as orderlies to feed the other prisoners. It was this significant breach of standard security practices which directly resulted in the murders of the five prisoners. As is so often the case, the callous disregard for the security of prisoners, using some of them against the others, combined with a high level of rage and frustration caused by constant provocation, resulted in death, destruction and despair. The NIC report concluded that getting the PC prisoners was not even part of the original plan, but that the opportunity to settle scores arose when the guards retreated from the

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Prisoners' Justice Day

August 10th was again commemorated by many inside and outside prison as Prisoners' Justice Day, the day to remember those who have died unnatural deaths in prisons. Their acts of resistance — fasting and workstrikes within prisons, demonstrations and vigils on the outside — are to show solidarity among prisoners and also to raise awareness of the appalling prison conditions which are responsible for the murder, the suicide and the neglect.

For the third consecutive year, the Prisoners' Justice Day Committee (PJD) of Toronto co-ordinated their efforts with prisoners and their support groups to produce a radio show sponsored by CKLN that was aired on an increasing number of community radio stations across the country. This year's program was unique, however, in that the committee's efforts were expanded to make PJD an international event, with prisoners from Canada and the U.S. submitting their written work. Some prisoners in Britain were also contacted through support groups.

In the early months of '92, the PJD Committee publicized a call for submissions for the radio program through various media and a direct mailing to prisoners. Besides the memorial theme of PJD, the committee's intentions were to provoke prisoners to express their thoughts concerning the increasing lack of solidarity among prisoners. The project, subtitled "Towards A Renewed Solidarity", was based on the premise that a once strong sense of solidarity inside prisons had declined. This created a vacuum in which the infighting among prisoners was encouraged as an administrative tactic by penologists to better control penal institutions and maintain their oppressive nature.

Prisoner Solidarity

While the committee did receive much excellent work from prisoners and ex-prisoners regarding their deceased comrades, there was also an acknowledgement of the reality that prisoner solidarity has declined, and that as a result of the many divisions, groups inside are becoming more and more ineffective in their struggles for the changes in the justice system that would ultimately destroy and abolish its prison arm.

A two-hour program was put together in four 30-minute segments consisting of prisoners' writings, commentary by prisoner rights activists in French and English, and interviews with prisoners and ex-prisoners. However, what became highlighted throughout meetings during developmental stages of the project was much more than what the committee members had originally anticipated. We discovered that there is a growing number of prisoners groups and advocacy groups in the communities worldwide, and that these autonomous groups would gain strength and effectiveness through networking and closer contact. These groups, as well as various individuals, are actively seeking a recognition that prisons are draconian human warehouses worthy only of the wrecking ball and sledgehammer. In this respect, we need to build and maintain an effective movement based on solidarity inside and outside prison.

During the early summer months while the committee met weekly to develop plans for the radio program and to solicit stations to air it, mail trickled in from many sources — from coast to coast throughout North America and Britain. Many letters asked for information, as many people had never heard of PJD in some places. Others wrote expressing their concern that, yes, too many people do die needlessly in prison. Still others wrote of the encouragement such a project gave to their own struggles, and sent support and expressions of solidarity to this event called PJD. The committee was swamped with answering mail in order to maintain contact with prisoners, to encourage them and their support groups to develop their own plans for August 10th, and primarily to educate the

unaware regarding PJD, its history and philosophy.

It would be a monumental task to list all the people and groups contacted as well as those who became involved in one way or another, whether through planning and holding actual events in their respective communities or prisons, reading prisoners' writing for the radio tape, or simply lending support. Still, the various groups and their involvement deserve mention and commendation.

Committee's thanks

First of all, we must commend all the prisoners themselves who often faced reprisals for their acts of solidarity in refusing to work and eat during the 24 hours of August 10th and for their courage in sending their thoughts out past the prison censors. And the committee's thanks go out to all prisoner/inmate committees who were responsible for spreading the news about PJD and the call for submissions from the PJD Committee. In the U.S., the League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners of Seattle helped to let people know, as did *Prison News Service*, the *Prison Legal News*, members of the *Love and Rage*, and *Arm the Spirit* collectives, groups such as those advocating freedom for political prisoners and others, such as the Anarchist Black Cross whose autonomous groups surround the globe.

The committee also thanks the twenty-two radio stations that aired the program, and those groups which held events and demos in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and London, England. These demos were planned and hosted by such organizations as Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Action Support Network (PASAN) and AIDS Action Now (AAN) in Toronto, and the Anarchist Black Cross in London, England. Commendation and thanks is also certainly due to the artists' gallery in Toronto, A Space, whose members graciously spent time and effort with administrative work throughout the project and who also granted funds as honoraria to those prisoners whose writing was featured on the radio show.

Neither must we fail to mention and thank CKLN-FM, the co-sponsor for the project, who also gave valuable studio time and technical assistance. A very special thanks is necessary to prisoners' rights activist, Gay Bell, for her seemingly endless energy, caring and support, not to mention the inspiration she provided to the PJD committee members, Florian Lévesque, Jimmy Groat and myself. And never will we forget those prisoners who died unnatural deaths, remembering their fatal struggles, and their spirits will continue to live on through our love and solidarity.

Unfortunately, my own failure at emotional and attitudinal adjustment to society at large resulted in my anti-social behaviour and parole revocation just prior to completion of the radio tapes. Therefore, this account was written from memory and I must apologize if I've forgotten to mention something important. A memory lapse should not be considered as a reflection on matters of conse-

quence, groups or individuals. I owe much appreciation to Jim Campbell for taking my place in the final hours of completion of the tapes and the CKLN Saturday Morning Live program on August 8th, and I can only hope my future involvement in struggles related to prisoners everywhere will reflect my appreciation. In closing I invite anyone interested in writing, networking or maintaining prisoners' rights struggles to contact:

Prisoners' Justice Day Committee
A Space
183 Bathurst St.
Toronto, Ont Canada M5T 2R7

We would be especially interested in hearing about any activities you might know of which took place on PJD, inside or outside prison. ∞

Zoltan Lugosi
Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre

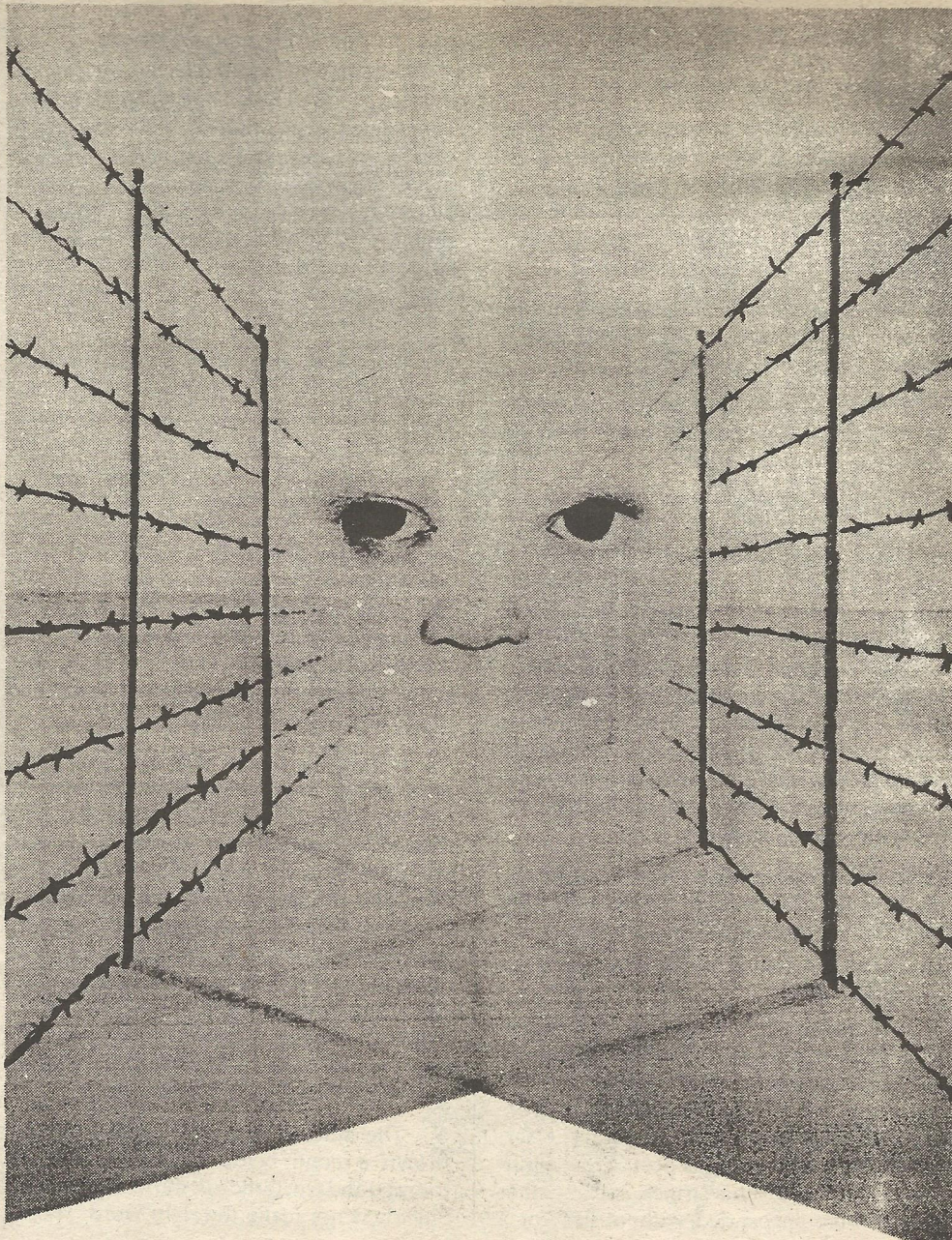
August 10th on the outside

Seventy-five people marked August 10th by demonstrating at the provincial Ministry of Corrections office in downtown Toronto. Speakers at the demonstration, sponsored by Prisoners' Justice Day Committee, AIDS Action Now, and Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Support Action Network (PASAN), spoke to various issues in relation to prisoners: The AIDS/HIV crisis in particular, and the inadequate health care in general, as well as the ongoing human rights violations, forced transfers, institutional racism, sexism and homophobia. The Brave Thunder Drummers from the Aboriginal Legal Services opened the gathering with two songs.

The encouraging aspect of the day was the range of people who attended: ex-prisoners, people who work with both released and current prisoners, AIDS activists, gays and lesbians, Native people, anarchists and other community activists.

In Edmonton, ten people went to the Edmonton Institution where folksinger Kathleen Yearwood, defying a prisonrat's threat of a trespassing charge, laid a wreath in memory of a friend who had committed suicide after being released from the prison. Yearwood, in a letter to *PNS*, notes that though still small, the demonstration was a gain from last year when she went alone. She also said that there was a lot of press coverage and it was surprisingly sympathetic.

At a Vancouver rally, Brent Taylor, on parole after serving seven years for his political activity, estimated that during his four years at Milhaven Penitentiary in Ontario there were at least 15 suicides, seven or eight killings and three or four medical deaths. Claire Culhane of the Prisoners' Rights Group said that government statistics show that 324 prisoners died unnatural deaths in Canadian prisons from 1983 to 1991, while 48 died in British Columbia jails.



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Donations are needed to keep this project going. Prison support groups can get multiple copies for use in their work for the cost of postage.

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Graphics and articles are welcomed. Deadline for the next issue is November 10th.

There was no July/August 1992 issue.

Cruelty, not kindness, in Canadian prisons

In March/91, two prisoners were killed when they, and a third prisoner, Shawn Murray, took hostages at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary (known as PA) in Prince Albert. In early July we received a letter from Murray seeking support to keep him from being transferred from the Special Handling Unit (SHU) in Laval, Quebec, to the SHU in PA. With support, Murray was able to keep from being sent back to Prince Albert, but we're publishing the letter in which he requested support (support letters to the warden are not needed at this point in time) and part of a second letter outlining the issues. The integration of Protective Custody (PC) prisoners into general population is proceeding quickly, and it has increased tensions throughout the federal prison system. (ed.)

On June 1, 1992, the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan issued a news release which was carried nationally. The release had been issued after a long-standing contract for service at Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Maximum) was cancelled on two weeks notice by the Warden, Jim Sullivan. The news release goes on to state that, "For the past year, the John Howard Societies of Saskatchewan and Canada, along with a number of other groups, have been seeking a federal public inquiry into last year's hostage-taking and the shotgun deaths of two prisoners at its conclusion, at the Saskatchewan Pen in Prince Albert." This news release was consistent with a twenty-five page report prepared by the John Howard Society at the conclusion of the coroner's inquest held into the incident. This report pointed out several critical questions that were permitted to go unasked. As well, it pointed out various inconsistencies in statements which had been given by institutional swine. "Since O'Sullivan has cancelled the contract, our access to prisoners and others has been eliminated", the John Howard re-

lease goes on to state.

This report was issued, as I've stated, on June 1, 1992. However, it first ran nationally on June 3rd, 1992. On the same day, an involuntary transfer was initiated by the administration of my present location, the Special Handling Unit in Laval, Quebec—to have me transferred back (against my will) to Saskatchewan Pen where just over a year ago my brothers were savagely executed by swine.

Is this coincidence? Hardly! From the very moment I escaped that hell-hole I have, at every available opportunity, made people aware of the reality of what actually took place the morning of June 26, 1991. I have not been ignorant of the attention that the matter of my going public has received either.

This latest political ploy by the swine, as you all well know, is purely political—given the reality that once back in the hands of the Saskatchewan Pen swine, my access to anything other than a cell and an outrage at shotgun-toting pigs will be restricted at best!

This is the reality of being a prisoner. Period. No rights, no voice, and most importantly, no show of humanity. The blood of my brothers, and others before them, are forever engraved in the walls that surround that graveyard.

In March/91, when myself, Jerry MacDonald and David Warriner took those hostages in PA we were looking to stop the kind of change the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) was implementing, and continues to implement. One of our primary objectives was not unique, abolishment of involuntary transfers; our second, but equally

important demand, was for the CSC to abolish its forced integration of Protective Custody (PC) prisoners into the general population of all penitentiaries across this country. (Although our primary objective was in regards to Maximum and Medium Securities.) Jerry and David were executed; had I been in the sights, I too would have met their fate.

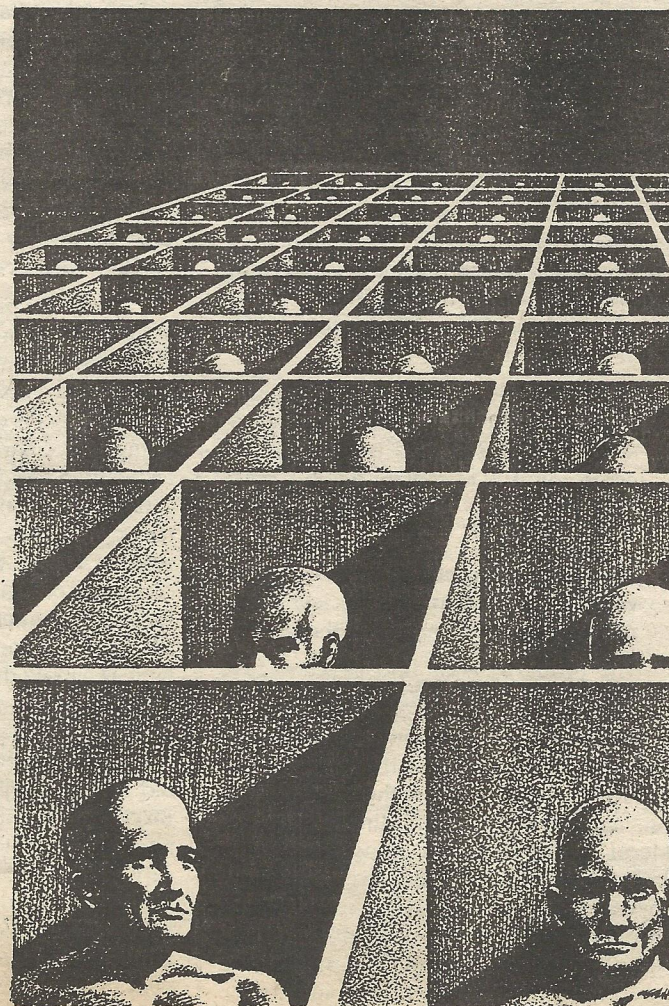
In doing what they did to them, I know they wanted to set an example. Also seeing how their integration policy saves, or rather puts, more money in their so-called "democratic" pockets, they wanted to attempt to ease the fears of the PC populace that such an incident would occur again. As I write this letter, almost 17 months after the executions of my brothers, the CSC's integration policy becomes more and more engraved in the minds and institutions across the country.

It is definitely not that the CSC has become more humane in their approach to integration. They have just developed more sophisticated methods of cruelty and torture, with the assistance of a psychological approach and a populace which doesn't seem interested in tearing down the administration's attempts to intimidate and suppress. The way things are going these days, hostage-takings, or worse, are the only tools available for prisoners within these joints to have their voices heard.

All committees in every prison now require

the consent and approval of the warden. And the reality is that they are now there for no ones benefit but there own. If there is one benefit to my being in a SHU for the past 17 months, it has to be the education I have received. ∞

Shawn Murray
246 Montee Gagnon, C.P. 5550
Ste Anne Des Plaines, Que. J0N 1H0



Justice for all — but not in Indianapolis

Once again, we bear witness to the anger, frustration and outrage of the Black community as yet another brother succumbs to summary execution. Once again, we mourn the senseless loss of one of our own. Just the latest in the now-routine series of victims felled by racist, gestapo/nazi-styled police lynchings, perpetrated unchecked upon our communities.

And, once again, our collective black psyche has been numbed by the ever-increasing realization that those sworn and paid to protect have all but declared war on the Black community, particularly the Black male.

Unfortunately, because a solution to this growing problem continues to elude us, we are forced to accept the fact that there will be other victims of police brutality. But while solutions continue to be hashed over, those who will be leaders would do well to put the Black community on notice to defend and protect themselves against renegade cops, much in the same way one would be expected to defend against burglars, robbers and rapists. Black people have just as much right to self-defense against those who would brutalize us in violation of the public's trust.

People are not expected to accept violence from anyone else. And Black people should neither be told nor be expected to accept becoming victims of violence at the hands of the man in blue. The police have crossed that "thin blue line", and only Black people themselves can defend it. But the community must be there to give support to and come to the defense of all those brothers and sisters who dare to refuse to become murdered victims of these wanton killers.

Unfortunately, the Black community and its leaders have already been derelict in this regard. To be considered a truly righteous effort, any demand for justice on behalf of those victims murdered by police, must

necessarily include those who survive such murderous attacks. Black people should not be expected to be murdered by police before they can receive the support of the community.

The Concerned Clergy's recent attempt to make distinctions between victims of police brutality is both contradictory and self-defeating. To remain silent and deny support to those victims who use force to survive murderous police assaults, merely because they will "face their day in court," is ludicrous at best. Such a

position simply legitimizes some violent acts perpetrated by police (when the victim survives) while condemning those same acts (when the victim dies), and runs the risk of polarizing segments of the community at a time when "unity" is most crucial to its endeavor.

It is hypocritical to demand justice on behalf of those murdered and ignore those still living who are similarly situated. Is the Concerned Clergy and others of like thinking so naive as to believe that the lynching of Black men ends at the steps of a courthouse, particularly those accused of killing a white police officer? Those fortunate enough to survive police-intended executions in the street, ultimately find themselves rail-roaded to death (as in death sentences) in the courts. This railroad of Blacks is made all too easy, especially for those accused of killing a police officer. Because those so accused are automatically alienated by the Black community, giving the "system" a free hand to do as it will.

For the Black man, his "day in court" is tantamount to genocide, evident by the fact Blacks represent over 50% of the prison population in the U.S.

Our lynching began more than ten years ago. On 11/Dec/80, the undersigned, along with two women, were (and still remain) victims of a vicious pre-dawn police assault, as we lay asleep in our home. The police, unannounced, forced entry into our home and began firing upon us. Rather than become murdered victims (which likely would have guaranteed us community support) we chose to exercise our right to self-defense against the unidentified intruders. In the aftermath, one officer was dead and one of the male occupants, seriously wounded, barely survived his wounds.

Since that time evidence used against us clearly shows what the police/state purported to have happened that day to be absolutely false. But the conspiracy to keep us behind bars and carry out our death sentences continues, largely because the Black community and its leaders, through their silence, have sanctioned this travesty and ultimately our fate.

In the same way Indianapolis police have never been held responsible for murdering Blacks, Blacks who survive by successfully defending against brutal police assaults have never, in the eyes of Black leaders, been seen as remotely justified in their actions. To refuse to become a murdered victim is not a crime.

We overwhelmingly commend those who take the courageous stance of giving voice to those whose voices have been unjustly silenced by those sworn to protect the very sanctity of life. We also call upon the Black community, its leaders, clergy, and all responsible, justice loving people, to give voice to other voiceless victims — those who survived violent police confrontations. Who because of the blackness of their skin, political and economic status are unjustly treated by a "system" that consistently shows a disregard for the rights of Black people.

We urge you to call upon the powers-that-be to conduct an investigation into the circumstances of our case, as well as an investigation into the deaths of those murdered by police violence. We ask that you give voice to our cause at your protests, demonstrations, and demands for justice — while there is still time. ∞

In solidarity,

Ajamu Nassor-Resnover #4168
Ziyon Yisrayl-Smith #4330
Kondo Nassor-Resnover #22759
Indiana State Prison
P.O. Box 41
Michigan City, IN 46360

Solidarity efforts should be directed to:

Solidarity Justice & Freedom Committee
c/o B.C. Resnover
P.O. Box 18167
Indianapolis, IN 46218



Shawnee Unit – a control unit for women

In May of this year, a nationally coordinated mobilization against control units took place. The call was issued by the Puerto Rican and New Afrikan liberation movements, the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML), and other solidarity organizations on the twentieth anniversary of the Attica Rebellion. The first control unit was also built 20 years ago, as part of a wave of repression carried out by the government against the upsurge of revolutionary and progressive movements in that period. The mobilization condemned the Marionization of prisons and the proliferation of control units. In the preceding months a process of education by the sponsors focused on:

- The use of control units as tools of political repression. A past warden of Marion has stated: "The purpose of the Marion control unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in society at large."
- The fact that the national oppression and white supremacy of U.S. society determine who is incarcerated in these units.
- The brutal physical and psychological conditions in the control units.

There was no mention of women and women's control units in the mobilization propaganda. The history of the use of control units against women, including the current federal incarnation, the Shawnee Unit at Marianna, Florida, was ignored. A false picture was projected – that women are exempt from placement in control units; that Shawnee is not a control unit because it doesn't use the same physical brutality as men's control units.

This view undermines the struggle against control units. Important milestones are overlooked: the mobilization against the Cardinal Unit at Alderson, WV, and the national campaign to shut down the High Security Unit (HSU) at Lexington, KY. These efforts were significant because of the explicit political mission of these units: targeting women political prisoners and Prisoners of War from the Puerto Rican Independence Movement and white anti-imperialist movement.

Sidelining women as equal participants in the struggle to close all control units has deeper implications. It diminishes the importance of women's resistance. It ignores the brutality of psychological methods of control and behavior modification. It plays into the government mythology that women are more submissive and open to manipulation. And because a number of political prisoners and Prisoners of War have spent the majority of our sentences in control units, this omission further distances us from our movements, indirectly playing into the principle objective of the government: isolation. By isolation we don't mean the physical barriers created by any incarceration, but rather the lack of an organic relationship to the very movements and struggles that we were part of – the activities for which we are imprisoned. By isolation we mean the turning of political prisoners into symbols to be remembered as historical leftovers of a more militant past, while ignoring them as continuing participants in today's progressive movements.

The government relies on secrecy and silence to accomplish its goals. This article was written to break with the secrecy and silence on Shawnee Unit; to recognize women as equal participants in the struggle to shut down all control units; and to be responsible to ongoing political struggle.

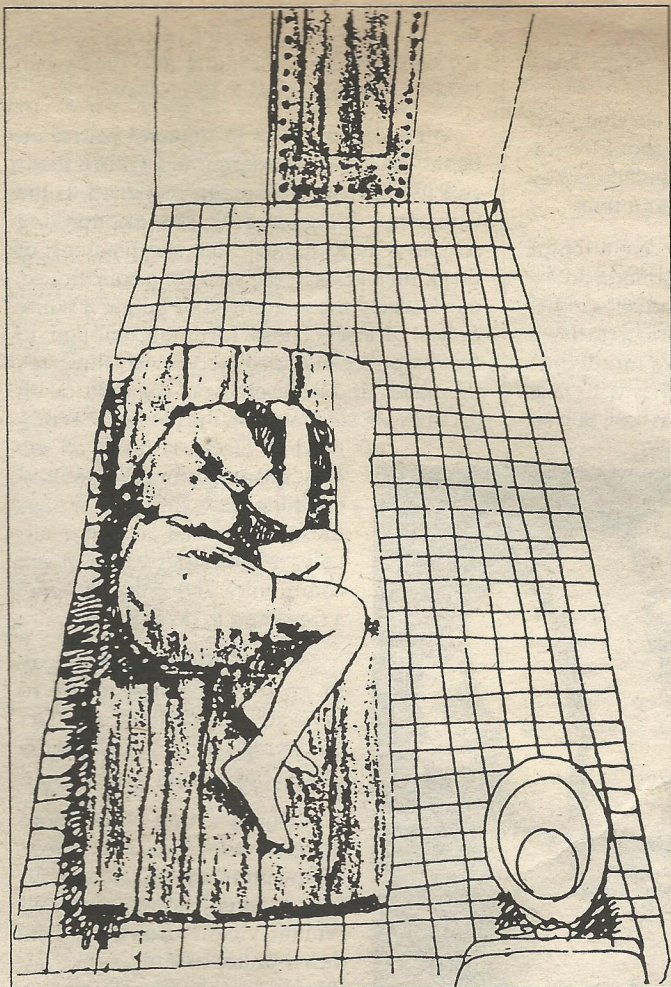
Shawnee is a control unit

CEML, in "Walkin' Steel," defines a control unit as a "combination of physical conditions, the policies which determine who is sent there, and the overall purpose of the unit"

Shawnee Unit was opened by the BOP in August 1988, after the small group isolation

experiment at Lexington HSU was shut down. The political and security mission of Shawnee is the same as that of the HSU: to control, isolate and neutralize women who, for varying reasons, pose either a political, escape, or disruption threat. Neutralization insures that the women imprisoned here will never leave prison with the full capacity to function. Central to the mission is the understanding that Washington can decide at any point to transfer any woman political prisoner of Prisoner of War here. The recent transfer of Laura Whitehorn is a case in point.

A distinct profile emerges: membership in or association with any of the national liberation movements, particularly the Puerto Rican and New Afrikan Independence Movements (as determined by the FBI); ongoing surveillance and counterinsurgency against the progressive movements; classification of political acts as "sophisticated criminal conspiracies," characterized by employment of armed struggle; and punishment for continued commitment to non-collaboration. Reflecting the centrality of the oppression of Black people in the history of the U.S., we have been told that we were designated here because of our conviction in or association with the so-called "Brinks Case." (Underlying all the charges in this case, now 11 years old, is the struggle for self-determination by Black people and active solidarity with this struggle by white anti-imperialists.) The unit serves as a public admonishment to those who would challenge the supremacy of the U.S. – deterrence and isolation are central to its mission. It also serves to maintain control over all women in BOP prisons: in less than 24 hours, twelve women who were targeted as leadership of the recent demonstration by women at Lexington against police violence were transferred here.



Once a control unit is set up, it fulfills many needs. The BOP operates Shawnee with some flexibility. Protected witnesses, disciplinary cases, high profile individuals, members of various Colombian cartels, and women with successful escape histories are imprisoned here. What distinguishes them from the political prisoners is their ability to transfer out of Shawnee. Over the past year, there has been a massive movement out of the unit. But the political prisoners, despite repeated requests to be transferred, have been excluded from this.

Psychological control

To wash away the brutal image of the HSU, the BOP has created the deception that life at Shawnee is normal, not designated or manipulated. The physical plant is designed to deflect any concern from the outside about human rights abuses – it looks comfortable and attractive. This appearance is a lie.

The women of Shawnee live in a psychologically assaultive environment that aims at destabilizing women's personal and social identities. This is true of the prison system as a whole; here it has been elevated to a primary weapon, implemented through a physical layout and day-to-day regimen that produce inwardness and self-containment. The unit is a small triangle with a small yard. Within this severely limited space, women are under constant scrutiny and observation. In the unit, cameras and listening devices (the latter are installed in every cell) insure constant surveillance and control of even the most intimate conversation. Lockdown is not necessary because there is nowhere to go, and individuals can be observed and controlled better while having the illusion of some mobility.

The fences around the yard – the only place where one could have any sense that an outside world existed – were recently covered with green cloth, further hammering into the women the sense of being completely apart and separate. It is one thing to be imprisoned in this tiny isolation unit for a year or two, another to be told one will be here for three more decades – that this small unit will be one's world for the rest of one's life.

Compared to the other federal prisons for women, Shawnee is like being in a suffocating cocoon. What replaces visual stimulation and communication is TV. As in the Marion control unit, there is a TV in every cell – the perfect answer to any complaints about isolation or boredom. TV provides the major link to the world – a link which conveniently produces passivity and inculcates "family values."

The intense physical limitations are compounded by a total lack of educational, training, or recreational programs. At a time when such programs are being expanded at other women's prisons, here, at the end of the line, women are not worthy of even the pretense of rehabilitation. The geographical location of Shawnee makes contact with family and community an almost impossible task. Gradually, women here begin to lose their ability to relate to the outside world. As time moves on, frustration sets in, accompanied by alienation and despair. The result is the creation of dysfunctional individuals who are completely self-involved, unable to participate in organized social activities, and unprepared for eventual reintegration into life on the outside: women who resist less, demand less, and see each other as fierce competitors for the few privileges allowed.

Competition and individualism become the defining characteristics of personality distortion here. The staff seeks out the most

needy personalities and molds them into informants. Unit life has been rocked by a number of internal investigations begun when individual prisoners "confided" in ambitious staff members. Snitching and cooperation are the pillars of the "justice system." Those who refuse to accept this standard of behavior are isolated and targeted by those who do. In the tiny world of the unit, this can have a massive effect on one's daily life.

A system of hierarchical privileges governs the unit and destroys any potential unit. Small comforts, such as personal clothing,

have become the mechanism through which cooperation and collaboration are obtained. The latest wrinkle is the institution of "privileged housing" – the arbitrary designation of a limited number of cells on the upper tier as a reward for acceptable behavior. This is classic behavior modification. The unit is in a constant state of uproar over the daily moves that enforce the fall from privileged status.

White supremacy and racism

There are close to 90 women imprisoned at Shawnee: 1/3 Black women from various parts of the world, 1/3 Latin women, 1/3 white women, and a very small number of Native American women. The numerical balance belies the hegemony of white supremacist ideology. As outside the walls, a permanent conflict exists between Black people and those in power. Prisoners experience and are affected by the sharpening of conflict on the outside and the increasing national oppression experienced by Black people in particular. Events in California have given focus to the discontent and heightened the contradictions. Since May, an unprecedented number of Black women have been put in the hole – more than the total for the past two years. Currently, five women from the unit are in the hole; all are Black. And while the administration says that they do not deal with gangs, "Boyz 'N the Hood" and "Jungle Fever" were banned from the prison after the Aryan Brotherhood protested.

A strict segregationist policy determines who gets the jobs. After four years, no Black women have ever worked for education or recreation, except in janitorial jobs. It has taken just as long to place a Black woman in commissary and to promote one woman to be a trainer in the UNICOR factory. All Black staff have left the unit, eliminating the small cushion they provided. This is significant, as staff in the federal system determine everything from access to family to release conditions.

Racism governs how religion can be practiced. Islam, Judaism, and Native American religions are either totally ignored or marginalized. One cannot help but notice this, since there is a daily diet of fundamentalist Protestant and Catholic services, seminars and retreats.

Superexploitation of women's labor

Like B block at Marion, there is no productive labor at Shawnee besides UNICOR. Unit life is organized to facilitate the functioning of the Automated Data Processing (ADP) factory. Nearly 40 women work here, twelve hours a day and five more hours on Saturday. The forced rhythm of this work has made the ADP factory the most profitable UNICOR operation in the BOP for its size. The complete lack of any other jobs, the need for funds, the lack of family support, the enormous expense of living in Shawnee, all push women into UNICOR, into intense competition and into an acceptance of their exploitation. Unlike general population prisons, Shawnee prisoners are not even permitted to work in jobs maintaining the physical plant. Removing productive labor is an element in destroying human identity and self-worth.

The use of violence against women in prisons is increasing

The recent physical attacks by male guards at Lexington, and a similar incident here at Shawnee, illustrate the marked tendency towards using greater force to control women prisoners. While lower security women are being sent to minimum security facilities, those left in high security prisons will be more and more vulnerable to physical attack – justified by being characterized by the BOP as "dangerous."

Misogyny and homophobia

Women in prison are at the very bottom. The misogyny and contempt for women in



the society as a whole are compounded by the way the prison system is organized to exploit and utilize women's oppression. The BOP characterizes some women as "dangerous" and "terrorist" (having gone beyond the bounds of acceptable female behavior in the U.S.), making them the target of particularized repression, scorn and hatred. To be classified maximum security is to be seen as less than human, by definition not eligible for "rehabilitation."

All women's prisons operate based on the all-pervasive threat of sexual assault, and the dehumanizing invasion of privacy. Throughout the state and federal prison system in the U.S., invasive "pat searches" of women by male guards insure that a woman prisoner is daily reminded of her powerlessness: she cannot even defend her own body.

In the control unit, there is absolutely no privacy: windows in cell doors (which cannot be covered), patrolling of the unit by male guards, and the presence of the bathrooms in the cells guarantee this. The voyeuristic nature of the constant surveillance is a matter of record: in the past year alone, there have been three major internal investigations of sexual harassment and misconduct by male officers -- including rape.

Programs that exist in other women's prisons, addressing the particular needs of women, are deemed frivolous at Shawnee. Most women here are mothers; but no support at all is given to efforts to maintain the vital relationship between mother and child. Similarly, if Shawnee were not a control unit, then education, recreation, religious and cultural programs should be on a par with those at Lewisburg, Leavenworth, and Lompoc (three men's high security prisons). But not a single program available in those prisons is available here.

The median age of the women here is 37 -- a situation distinct from any other women's prison. Nearly everyone is doing more than 15 years; more than ten women are serving life sentences without parole. Menopause is the main medical problem in the unit. Menopause is an emotional as well as a physiological process. Ignoring this is a pillar of misogynist Western medicine. In the repressive reality of Shawnee, refusal to recognize and treat the symptoms of menopause becomes a cruel means of punishment and an attack on the integrity of one's personality.

Security determines all medical care. Two women who have suffered strokes here were both denied access to necessary treatment in a hospital: a life-threatening decision, made solely for "security reasons."

Intense isolation and lack of activities mean that the loving relationships that provide intimacy and comfort to women in all prisons are of heightened importance here. Until recently, a seemingly tolerant attitude towards lesbian relationships was actually a form of control. For lesbian relationships to function without disciplinary intervention by the police, the women had to negotiate with, and in some instances work for, the staff. This tolerance was viewed as necessary because the relationships served as a safety valve for the tensions and anger in the population. As a result of the system of police-sanctioned tolerance, people tended to elevate the individual relationships above any collective alliances that might endanger the administration's rule over the unit.

This situation served to increase the already intense homophobia in the population. A new administration has now ended the tolerance, and lesbians are now suffering greater harassment and discrimination. A witch hunt is underway to identify lesbians and couples engaging in homosexual behavior.

Together with racism, misogyny and homophobia define conditions here. When coupled with the repressive practices of a control unit, psychological disablement can result -- fulfilling the Shawnee mission.

Conclusion

Partly as a result of the astronomic rise in the number of women in prison and the resulting public interest in women's prisons, and partly as a result of the struggle against the Lexington HSU, the BOP has to be very careful not to appear to be brutal in its treatment of women prisoners. The investigations of the HSU by Amnesty International, the Methodist Church, the American Civil Liberties Union and others struck a nerve in Washington. The experiment carried out within the walls of the HSU failed because of

the personal and political resistance of those inside and outside the walls. But this defeat did not deter the BOP from its stated goals. It just drove them to hide them cosmetically behind a veneer of new paint and the momentary elimination of the most notorious abuses. The BOP always denies the truth of its workings. It denies the existence of control units and this unit in particular, not even listing it in the BOP Register of Prisons. Nevertheless, Shawnee is the present women's version of the Marionization of the prison system. The next one is supposed to be opened in North Carolina in 1994. The movement should not fall into the trap and ignore the particular control strategy aimed at women. Uncovering and exposing the reality that Shawnee Unit is a control unit will contribute to the movement against all control units.

Silvia Baraldini
Marilyn Buck
Susan Rosenberg
Laura Whitehorn
Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoners
Marianna, FL
August 1992

IT'S ABOUT
BREAKING DOWN
THE SYSTEMS
OF POWER!



Calling Muslim Prisoners

The National Incarcerated Muslim Network has three purposes.

1. To survey any national trend to discriminate against incarcerated Muslims.
2. To provide a source list to the imprisoned Muslim as to where he/she can seek help on Islamic literature and information.
3. To provide a format where Muslims in various prison units can seek moral support from the outside Islamic communities that are in their area.

Services are available to all prisoners. Incarcerated Muslims should request a questionnaire. The non-Muslim prisoner should request just a source list. If you have addresses of Islamic institutions that assist imprisoned Muslims with literature, information or monetary funds, share them with us. This is for us -- the incarcerated Muslim.

If you are an Islamic institution, we need your support in the form of guest visits, printed materials, monetary assistance for our spiritual development. Please request how you are best able to fulfill the cause of Allah with a letter of consent.

Write:

The National Incarcerated Muslim Network
c/o Maurice Taylor #476837
Rt. 3 Box 59
Rosharon, TX 77583

The politics of the hypocrites

"...We shall now criticize the unjust, with the weapon...." (Comrade George)

This piece comes as a critical analysis, in an attempt to address and deal with the dilemma of the jailhouse rebels -- you know, the brothers that straight up advocate one thing while in captivity, but embark on a totally different course and journey once they're released. The brothers who had nothing but pure 'Blood In Their Eyes' while here, who, when they spoke, nothing but fire came out, because, purportedly, they were out-and-out Dragons, advocating the things that Dragons engage in when the opportunity presents itself. Those, who, while 'inside', had nothing but harsh criticism for those on the 'outside' fails to do so themselves. The so-called 'Army Builders' -- who, gets out and build nothing but drug empires, while at the same time trying to cling to their once-held politico status and lines; you can't have it both ways, you're either 'bandits' or 'Freedom Fighters'.

You'll claim to love (George), but then you sold out his spirit, and disgraced his legacy. You've allowed the flames that you thought you had, to be extinguished with drops of water. All the years of "fantasizing" of how it would be, or, how you thought it would be, -- until suddenly awakened with cold reality, that to apply "theory", is a little different, than the application of "practice"; you realize that it's one thing to "talk it", but another thing to "walk it". It's not necessary to mention any names, you know who you are, I've been around most of you in these joints here in Jersey, so i know what you advocated, and i know what you'll have done, or didn't do. You manages to do everything, but what you said you would. As

i've always said, the test is not actually what one did while in captivity, the real test is what you do when you get out into the 'field'. You had an obligation to either honor and uphold your commitments, or to betray it; you chose the latter.

You spoke passionately thru the years about this thing called 'Show Time', but when the time come, you don't show. You've sold your souls, and now uses the skills and techniques you learned about 'clandestinity',



and going "underground", to hide from, not your enemy, but the very ones you once called your "comrades". You cleverly makes yourselves unavailable and becomes elusive to those who have taught you how to do so; you change your phone numbers, your locations, your identity, for, obviously, you've had a change of heart -- and a change of mind. Some have went even so far as to "stage their own deaths", when called on for the "Focomotor", as a futile attempt to justify their unavailability -- now that's extreme, but it's human nature, and that's what fear will do, if you let it.

In addition to the elements of fear, our people historically was taught by the enemy not to be loyal to each other, and to be as superficial as possible; apparently, some of us are still perpetuating these teachings today, thus, unable to discard the slavemaster's desires and wishes.

To those who left their commitments inside their prison cell; you may have thought you were serious, but you know that you wasn't -- you must go back to the "minor" league, for you're definitely not ready for nothing "major".

Meanwhiles, those who are true to themselves and to others, who refuse to be "counted amongst those who've been bent or broken" -- who won't forget or "sell out", lingers, laying in the gap, sharpening their politico swords, waiting for the opportunity, their chance to set examples, because, in spite of all, one of these days, the real "Dragon Gone Come!!" ∞

In the Spirit of George; Let the Dragon(s) Fly!!
Long Live Mumia!
Hotep

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The prison perspective

I assume that all of us, *PNS* readers, know that incarceration is not rehabilitative. We arrive, regardless of our alleged crime, with the stigma of 'anti-socials'. If we are lucky to leave, we do so with bitterness and hate-filled hearts. We also arrive back in the free world society disoriented and in a state of disillusionment — not knowing who to trust or turn to, similar symptoms to post-traumatic stress syndrome.

Paradoxically, we are treated or dealt with by the prisoncrats in a manner totally opposite to how we are to react to free world situations. For those of us who pertinaciously hold onto our opinions, beliefs and self-worth, we are dealt with severely in order to break our spirits.

We are told we have to respect authoritative figures, yet ditto is not a word they acknowledge where it concerns prisoners. The few that do either do not last long on their jobs or do not make any significant rank so they can promote their ideologies.

We are told that it is against the prison rules to give anything to a fellow prisoner in need. Charity or a helping hand is considered 'loan-sharking'.

We even find ourselves pitted against each other, overtly and covertly, by letting the prisoncrats use an honor system against us. This brings one select group to the thinking that they are better than the rest. Most of these honor prisoners(?) will do whatever it takes to retain their status. It seems even more ironic here on death row where I am housed. Here the state has declared their lives voidable and yet some still find the need to curry their executioner's favoritism by plotting, lying and snitching on the rest of the prisoners.

Families, friends and associates tell me that I have a lot of potential and ask when am I going to wake up and use it to straighten up my life. Much to the chagrin of most of them, I heeded their advice. The rest of them smile knowingly when I began writing about my awakening:

Our Inner Selves

Where in the beginning, before my soul was laid bare to the experiences of a culture/society, I was as a babe lost in the deep darkness of a European pine forest — open to the emotions, suggestions and prejudices of my environment.

Where in the beginning, while still soft and cuddly, not knowing the lies or truths, society began to ponder: "Will this bundle of softness form into an ordinary, predictable member? Or will he be another mass of mistakes who believes in the pursuit of his own destiny — expressing his opinions and beliefs to the extremes of his mental and physical capacities?"

"Yes! Bring forth the chains and bind my physical self", I loudly proclaim. Life will proceed and I will continue on, even with but flickers of light dancing within my subconscious — I will always hold the freedom of my own mentality.

You wonder at my continued resolve to resist the norms of your society. And you wonder why I continue to struggle against my bonds when my inner rage is incomprehensible to your senses — muted, as if I am encased in an invisible glass cage.

Maybe it is not my bonds that I struggle so against. Maybe I am struggling with all of my ability to reach far enough down to grasp the edges of this squared circle of glass to let a breath of freedom into the programmed reality of your prison(?)! Freedom comes first from our inner selves! (Written by me sometime 1987)

Through our collective prison experiences we all know that, for the greatest part, for those of us who are forced to live in a prison setting for extended periods (years), our compassion for our fellow human beings undergoes attack. In essence, we become desensi-

tized, without daily effort. Regardless, none of us leave these pits of degradation unscathed or unscarred. Each of us must find a way to deal with and survive this insanity. Turning or letting this system turn us on each other or ourselves is giving our oppressors an excuse to attempt to legitimize the need for prisons.

The other side

Man's greatest fear is the fear of the unknown. Does he grasp for the switch towards enlightenment with dread or anticipation? Does he grasp at all? This is dependent upon the evolving circumstances and the individual.

Were they shoved through a barrier into encompassing darkness, being forced to cope with the reality confronting them with survival instincts comparable to our primitive forbears? Or did they cope by drawing into the pasture of the womb — in a state of submission and servility?

Were they affected by this step into the uncertainties of all their tomorrows? Maybe they learned how to walk around in a vacuum — unfeeling or uncaring for the pain and frustrations of others around themselves. Maybe they erupted from these emotional onslaughts in a fit of momentary mental instability or indignation against their tormentors or oppressors? Maybe they welcomed the satin-like feeling of a noose tightening around their neck before the bones snapped?

The questions, as are the answers, are as varied as the individuals opposing authorities. Yet I do know that when you pitch a person into an arena of physical confinement, where hurt and pain and deception are their constant bedfellows, where they are even deprived of the privacy to contemplate their predicament, that person will invariably become a 'Beast of Prey' or a 'Prey of the Beast' — even if only onto himself he gnashes and gnaws.

Loosen my bonds!!!

(written by me before my June 1988 escape)

While we are fortunate to have a forum, *Prison News Service*, to express our rage, should we not take better advantage of this to define our objective: ending prisons and finding alternatives to deal with the social, economic and political disparities that the government uses to manipulate the masses to legitimize prisons?

The most asked question I receive from people when I tell them I do not believe in prisons is, "What's the alternative?" I tell them about a document written by Ed Mead, *Politics of Crime*, (1979). It deals with commu-

nity control (policing). If a person cannot be re-educated to stop preying on the poor, working class and small businesses then the community enforcement groups should use "... a judicious application of revolutionary violence, under no circumstances should such persons be handed over to the enemy's apparatus of repression (state's police forces). If force is used, it is not for punishment, but only because the people do not yet possess the resources to establish re-education facilities."

While I may not totally agree with Ed Mead's political ideology, we do agree that the present government is an enemy of the less rich part (majority) of society.

We also agree that penal institutions are nothing but instruments to oppress the less rich elements of society. They do not help solve any problems, but only lock away the ugly effects of a system's failings — political, economic and social.

Even when prisoners are released, they wear the stigma of being in prison with them, emotionally (being bitter, disoriented and without proper support from families and facilities) and physically. One is even reduced to minimum-wage jobs, if any at all, due to having a "prior criminal conviction". It pretty much keeps you from getting a passport too.

This is a problem that can be attacked now. The laws governing this need to be repealed. This can be obtained if people on the outside, in the know, start pushing for it.

The ultimate objective, of course, is the elimination of prisons. We may or may not realize this in our own lifetime, but we have to begin the fight now for our future brothers and sisters. In order to do this we have to have an agenda.

This is what we would like to see in future editions of *PNS* — a meeting of the minds on prison elimination. We are not going to agree on every detail, but who knows what we can achieve together. We have to not only educate ourselves in this regard, but the public too. ∞

In Solidarity

Derrick Quintero #165463
RMSI 2-D-108
7475 Cockrill Bend Industrial Rd.
Nashville, TN 37243-0471

Derrick has received some letters to which he is unable to respond because they lack a complete return address. So if writing to him, or any other prisoner, make sure your address is included on both the envelope and the letter. (ed.)



Animal Liberation Front strikes again ... Freeing cats is "threat to society"

On June 19/92 officers of the RCMP/Edmonton Police Service Joint Integrated Intelligence Unit raided two homes in Edmonton, Alberta, arresting and charging me with Break and Enter (B&E)/Mischief over \$1000 and Theft over \$1000 regarding the June 1/92 Animal Liberation Front (ALF) action at the University of Alberta Bio-Animal Kennels where 29 cats were liberated and \$100,000 damage was done. One charge of arson was also laid regarding the Dec/15/91 incident at Billingsgate Fish Co. where three delivery trucks were burned with \$100,000 damage.

Later the same day, RCMP arrested Grant Howard as he stepped off a bus in Golden, British Columbia and charged him with B&E, Mischief over \$1000 and Theft over \$1000 for the U of A liberation.

Both Grant and I were remanded in custody, appeared in court and have pleaded not guilty to all charges. While in custody I was also charged with Mischief over \$1000 re-

garding a Jan/9/92 incident at Billingsgate Fish Co., where delivery trucks were spray-painted with slogans and had their tires slashed, resulting in \$6500 damage; Mischief under \$1000 (3 counts) regarding the defacement of three Fur Council of Canada advertising billboards; Break and Enter to Commit Arson for the Dec/18/91 incident where a Hook Outdoor Advertising (Fur Council billboards) truck was burned, \$10,000 damage; Mischief under \$1000/Attempted Arson regarding the Jan/1/92 incident at Ouellette Packers where property was painted with slogans and an attempt was made to set a van on fire, \$4000 damage.

Grant has since been released on \$4000 cash bail and is awaiting trial. I've been denied bail in both provincial and Queen's Bench courts (twice) on the grounds that I am a "threat to society".

On July 3/92, the RCMP issued a Canada-wide warrant for the arrest of David Barbarash

of Burnaby, B.C. David is wanted on charges of Break and Enter/Theft over \$1000/Mischief over \$1000 regarding the U of A action. In early July, FBI agents visited local police detectives and compared notes and harassed local activists seeking information on ALF and EF! (Earth First) "radicals" in Canada and the U.S.

Still fighting strong

Darren Thurston
Edmonton Remand Centre
9660-104th Ave.
Edmonton, AB T5H 4B5

P.S. Greetings, well I'm not exactly sure what Bulldozer has been up to lately. Never really been interested in prisoner support too much, now I get to see its importance first hand. I never wrote to you before, although I've read things here and there about the group. I've been involved with the ALF Support Group of Canada, various EF! groups and the Vancouver anarchist scene over the years. Could you send me any literature that you have available? Thanks. ∞

For more info write:

ALF Support Group (Canada)
P.O. Box 75029, Ritchie Postal Outlet
Edmonton, AB T6E 6K1

Facing Reality

Studying the faces on the "Face Reality" poster
And the harsh reality that these beautiful faces
Will remain where they are, steals my breath away –
Frozen on this page – for how long?!?
Captured and held behind the steel razor wire
And concrete madness of the Kamps,
Which have been my reality for the past 7 years
Now, when I walk out this gate,
What do I do about them?!?

Leave Pieces of my heart scattered wherever they are –

LEONARD
AURA

PELTIER
HITEHORN

Smiling Outside, while my head aches from wondering what I can do.

SEEKOU
DINGA

Enough Crying!!!

DWIN
ORTES

Must Shake myself sober to the realities ahead.

MUTULU
HAKUR

Little Wonder that the road will be difficult yet wonderful ... but

AURA

HITEHORN

Just Leave half of me behind ... and go on?!??

JAAN

AAMAN

Sunshine Across my face warm -- blinding in its brilliance

SUNDIATA

COLI

Enough Emptiness!! Time to live anew!

LIZAM

SCOBAR

I Love Roses and the Sea

DAUZ

RODRIGUEZ

Sisterhood Rekindled!

USAN

ROSENBERG

Growing Together – again with my Family ... but

ARY

TYLER

Just Dying to have my Comrades come with me!

JOSEPH

DOHERTY

Always Together – One Love ... but

ALEJANDRINA

TORRES

Time Moves forward –

THOMAS

MANNING

Carrying Troubles and pleasures with it

CARLOS

TORRES

Time Begins to mean something new.

TIM

LUNK

Just Seeing Patches of my life

JUAN

SEGARRA

PALMER

How Babies were torn from me ... but

HAYDEE

ELTRAN

Remembering Lovely Lighthearted images as well –

RAYMOND

LUC

EEVASSEUR

Me And Joyous Children together then ... and now?

UMIA

ABU

JAMAL

Cry Victory! my head tells my heart.

ARMEN

ALENTIN

Days Gone are over. That New Day is yet to come.

DAVID

ILBERT

Go Proudly and freely Home to my Son.

ERONIMO

PATT

And Believe in Life!

LAN

ERKMAN

And Make it work!

DOLFO

ATOS

And Recognize Reality to be what it is.

LICIA

RODRIGUEZ

Right When I thought I couldn't go Forward –

ICHARD

ILLIAMS

Kind Bright faces stare at me from the poster,

KATHY

ODDIN

And My Heart is filled with strength

BDUL

ALID

More Like – Determination!

AFOUNDI

AKE

Arises Right from my center

HMAID

AHMAN

Healing Broken dreams and

HERMAN

BELL

Remembering Just how

ICARDO

JIMENEZ

Lovely Each Comrade is

LINDA

EVANS

And No Wonder it's clear

LBERT

UH

ASHINGTON

How Sacred Being a part of this Reality is

HANIF

HABAZZ

BEY

Always Remembering

LBERTO

RODRIGUEZ

Being Home or in prison

ASHIR

AMEED

My Beautiful Comrades

ARILYN

BUCK

Surviving Bravely

YLVIA

ARALDINI

Raising Their fists – clenched and united

ROBERT

TAYLOR

Living Reality of Resistance

UIS

OSA

Caring And Simply Making the Most

AROL

NN

AUCIER

ANNING

Of Life's Real meaning

OSCAR

OPENZ

IVERA

Even Hell can't pull us down

DDIE

ATCHER

Just Above: Mountains we're still climbing

JALIL

BDUL

MUNTAQUIN

Delivery Pride, Justice and Peace

YLCIA

AGAN

As the message we Live, Love, Fight, Die and Live on for!

Barbara Curzi-Laaman
August 29, 1991 • Lexington, KY

HIV Seroprevalence Studies in Prisons

The AIDS crisis is over ten years old. But throughout the world, prison authorities have only begun to come to terms with the effects of the epidemic on prison systems. Many prisoners face forced HIV-antibody testing. A positive test means discrimination, isolation and inadequate medical care. Condoms and other safer sex materials are only rarely available and clean needles almost non-existent.

When administrators do consider the crisis, their concern is usually in maintaining order in the institution rather than in helping infected prisoners live with HIV. And prison bureaucrats are reluctant to develop the radical policies needed to confront the epidemic. They are literally willing to study HIV/AIDS issues in prisons to *death* before they get around to taking action.

For example in Ontario — where prisoners still have no access to condoms — the Ministry of Correctional Services recently proposed joining with a group of researchers at the University of Toronto to conduct a HIV seroprevalence study. The researchers planned to test over 20,000 prisoners for antibodies to HIV in order to find the rate of infection among people entering Ontario prisons. The testing would be "unlinked", so the researchers would not know who was being tested. And those being tested would never find out the results, whether positive or negative. Their point was simply to find out what percentage of prisoners were infected with HIV at the start of their incarceration.

A Toronto-based group of prison and AIDS activists (of which I am a member), the Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Support Action Network (PASAN) became involved in reviewing and criticizing this research project. PASAN opposed the idea of a seroprevalence study while there was still no adequate and comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy for the prisons.

First, we thought that studying the impact of an epidemic on prisoners without providing proper treatment was exploitative and immoral. Prisoners have had their freedom taken from them. There is no reason why they should also have to sacrifice their health. We felt it was ludicrous to spend money studying how bad the epidemic is when there are no plans to help those infected.

PASAN's second concern was the consequences the release of the study's results might have. How would guards respond when they found out that a certain percentage of prisoners were HIV positive? There are no anti-discrimination programs in place and we could too easily imagine that prisoners from groups thought to be at risk for HIV would be harassed and intimidated.

We were also concerned that some prisoners, when hearing the rate of HIV infection in prisons, would want to find out if they were infected and would have an HIV-antibody test while still inside. Testing in Ontario jails is sub-standard, with little or no pre- or post-test counselling and with few confidentiality safeguards. PASAN members recommend strongly that no prisoner use the testing service offered by the prisons.

PASAN is not opposed to all forms of HIV seroprevalence studies. For example, once HIV/AIDS policies are in place, such studies can help to track the success of reducing the number of new infections. But without adequate policies, massive screening studies are a waste of precious resources. A smaller "linked" study in which researchers basically provided anonymous HIV-testing (with proper counselling) to any prisoners who wanted it might be feasible although, again, the release of such a study might have harmful effects. Ongoing consultations with prisoners and prison groups is a necessary part of any successful seroprevalence study.

PASAN does not believe that a seroprevalence study is needed in order for prison administrators to implement adequate HIV/AIDS policies. It is clear that the AIDS epidemic has reached into the prisons. Nonetheless, such studies can serve as a useful tool when lobbying for HIV/AIDS programs. In the case at hand, we were faced with a difficult political question. Did we want to attempt to block the study? Or did we want to continue our criticism but let the study go forward?

After several meetings with the researchers and prison bureaucrats, we decided to take the latter course, writing to the Ministry of Correctional Services, the federal Ministry of Health and Welfare (which was funding the study), and the researchers themselves, reiterating our concerns with the study.

PASAN has been lobbying for the development of HIV/AIDS policies in Ontario and Canadian prisons. We have recently released a brief, "HIV/AIDS in Prison Systems: A Comprehensive Strategy," in which we call for: education for guards, administrators, and prisoners; condom distribution and needle exchanges; early release programs for prisoners with HIV/AIDS; anonymous testing and guarantees that everyone can keep her or his HIV-antibody status confidential; and medical and support programs. We plan to use the results from the seroprevalence study to increase our pressure on prison bureaucrats. (See the executive summary of the Study which accompanies this article.)

Our involvement with the consultation process for this seroprevalence study has, we hope, increased the researchers' awareness of their responsibilities to prisoners. The process also gives us a chance to further our lobbying efforts by giving us a forum for face-to-face contacts with government officials.

The issue of HIV seroprevalence studies in the prisons is complicated. For PASAN, it is fundamental that any seroprevalence study must be accountable to, and serve the needs of, prisoners, especially HIV-positive prisoners. Researchers must consult with representative community groups, and meet prisoners throughout their project, from its developmental phase to the release of their results. And those on the outside must be vigilant, making sure that prisoners' rights are not being violated in the name of "science".

Donald Ainslie

PASAN

c/o 622 Yonge St., 2nd Flr.
Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1Z8

HIV/AIDS in prison systems: a comprehensive strategy

A Brief from the Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Support Action Network to the Minister of Correctional Services and the Minister of Health, June 1992

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HIV/AIDS in prison systems: a comprehensive strategy

The Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Support Action Network (PASAN) is an Ontario coalition formed to advocate for the development and implementation of suitable provincial and federal policies on HIV/AIDS in prisons. PASAN's members include ex-prisoners and representatives from a variety of community-based organizations involved with prison issues and/or HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS crisis is devastating Canadian prisoners. Inmates are becoming infected with HIV during their incarceration because they do not have the information and resources to protect themselves. Once infected, their lives are endangered by a lack of access both to doctors specializing in HIV/AIDS and to non-approved treatments and alternative therapies. And prisoners with HIV/AIDS are maltreated. For example, they are often needlessly forced into isolation and their confidentiality is routinely violated because both guards and fellow prisoners are under the false impression that if they know who is infected then they need not take precautions to avoid HIV infection.

The AIDS crisis in prison systems is a product of government inaction. HIV transmission could be prevented and the health of prisoners with HIV/AIDS could be improved by the implementation of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy, encompassing education and prevention programs, and support and medical services.

PASAN urges both the provincial and federal governments to formulate and to implement such comprehensive HIV/AIDS policies. Our recommendations for the content of these policies are summarized below.

At the provincial level, we propose that a joint ministerial task force, including members from the Ministries of Correctional Services and of Health be formed to consult with prisoners, community groups, and prison staff unions while implementing our recommendations.

We also propose that the same process be undertaken at the federal level with Correctional Services Canada (CSC) and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. We urge these federal agencies to co-ordinate their response to our recommendations with the provincial task force.

Guiding principles

Five principles inform our approach to the questions concerning HIV/AIDS in prison systems:

- Prisoners with HIV/AIDS have a basic right to maintain their health
- Prisoners have a right to protect themselves against HIV infection
- Prisoners have a right to keep their health status private. This means that (i) HIV-antibody testing should only be done anonymously, and (ii) prisoners with HIV/AIDS should be able to keep their status confidential.
- Prisoners have a right to informed consent with respect to HIV-antibody testing and HIV/AIDS treatment.
- HIV/AIDS support, education, and treatment programs should be run by "outside" community-based organizations brought into the prisons rather than by correctional staff.

Furthermore, we recognize that the diversity of the prison population requires that all HIV/AIDS programs should be sensitive to differences of race, culture, gender, sexual ori-

entation, and mental and physical ability. Programs should be available in many languages and at varying literacy levels.

Overview of recommendations

An HIV/AIDS policy for the prisons must address two primary issues: the prevention of new HIV infection, and the care and support for those who are already infected with HIV or have AIDS. The following 36 recommendations addressing these two issues apply to the whole of the correctional system, both the men's and women's prisons. But because HIV/AIDS affects women differently than men, both physically and socially, we have also made the last four recommendations in order to address the HIV/AIDS-related needs specific to women prisoners.

Education will only be effective if prisoners have the means to act on their knowledge.

We are advocating for changes in the correctional systems. This does not mean that we want to lessen the safety and security of prisons; we recognize the concerns of guards and correctional services administrators around these issues. We believe that the promotion of health in the prison population and staff are the best ways to create safety and security. When the points outlined in our brief are taken into consideration, there is no real conflict between the needs of prisoners and the needs of prison staff with respect to HIV/AIDS.

Preventing HIV/AIDS in the prisons

HIV is transmitted through unsafe needle use and unsafe sex. Prisoners are engaging in these activities and putting themselves at risk for HIV infection because either they do not know these activities are unsafe, they do not know how to engage in them safely, or they do not have the means to engage in them safely. Comprehensive education is the first step to preventing HIV infection in the prisons.

But not only inmates need to be educated. Stopping the discrimination against those with HIV/AIDS and those engaging in behaviours associated with HIV/AIDS requires that HIV/AIDS education be directed at everyone involved with correctional systems. Therefore:

1. HIV/AIDS education should be compulsory for all inmates (male and female) and all staff providing services for incarcerated individuals (workers at the Ministry of Correctional Services and CSC such as guards, Case Management Officers, and Classification Officers; members of Correctional Officers' unions, e.g. OPSEU; Clinical Support staff; etc.).
2. Education must be comprehensive for both inmates and staff.
3. All educational presentations and materials must recognize and respond to the needs of prisoners with disabilities, from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, with varying language skills, and of different races, sexes, and sexual orientations.
4. In addition to group HIV/AIDS educational sessions, information should be made available to inmates individually upon entering and exiting the correc-

tional facility.

In order to guarantee that information is current and to ensure that the prisoners trust those providing the education:

5. External, community-based AIDS and health organizations should lead educational sessions. Peer education should also be promoted.

Education will only be effective if prisoners have the means to act on their knowledge. The federal government has recently, if belatedly, recognized the truth of this proposition by starting a condom distribution program. Such programs must be started in provincial institutions, and all such programs must be expanded to improve distribution methods and to include safer sex materials. Therefore:

6. Condoms, dental dams, latex gloves, appropriate lubricants, and other safer sex materials must be made available to all prisoners.

With the advent of its condom distribution plan, the federal government has acknowledged that consensual sexual activity takes place in prisons. This is not an illegal activity "outside". But because it is an institutional offense, prisoners, when having sex, are less likely to have safer sex: the extra time required is time in which they might be discovered and penalized. Accordingly:

7. Consensual sex between prisoners should not be an institutional offense.

Injection drug use is the second primary mode of HIV infection. And injection drug use is a fact of prison life that cannot be ignored. Just as safer sex education requires the distribution of safer sex materials, safer injection drug use education requires that prisoners have the means to use drugs safely. Denying inmates access to clean needles and bleach condemns them to preventable infection and illness. Thus:

8. A confidential needle exchange program should be implemented.

9. Bleach kits should be distributed in a non-identifying manner.

Needle exchange and bleach kit distribution programs outside of prisons no longer have many opponents. When people are aware that such programs make HIV easily preventable for injection drug users without, at the same time, increasing the drug use, opposition usually evaporates. To ensure that these programs do not meet opposition when implemented "inside":

10. A public relations campaign should be initiated to combat anticipated resistance by staff or the public to a needle exchange program.

Needle exchange and bleach kit distribution programs are most successful when they form part of a health model for understanding drug use. In such a model, prisoners are given information about the health consequences of continued drug use. Stopping using is identified as the healthiest option. Clean needle use is recommended for those who cannot or will not stop using. To facilitate the development of this health model:

11. Community-based workers should educate prisoners about substance use as a health issue.

12. Treatment programs for inmates with substance use concerns should be developed.

The use of unclean needles in tattooing is a third mode of HIV transmission in prisons. We suggest that:

13. Tattoo equipment and supplies should be covered under "hobby-craft"; extra safety precautions should be established.

Care and support for prisoners with HIV/AIDS

Prisoners with HIV/AIDS die faster than those with HIV/AIDS "outside". This fact is partly the result of inadequate support services for these prisoners. They are entitled to all



"PRAY FOR THE DEAD, BUT FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING" Mother Jones

of the medical and support services available to people with HIV/AIDS outside of prisons. Specifically:

14. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS must be guaranteed access to medical and dental workers of their choice. In particular, they must have access to experienced and expert HIV primary care physicians.

15. The services of community-based workers serving prisoners with HIV/AIDS must be made available to all prisoners who desire them.

16. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS must have access to alternative therapies and non-approved treatments.

Prisoners will more likely choose to be tested if they know they have options should they test positive.

A prisoner with HIV/AIDS also faces situations unlike those someone with HIV/AIDS on the "outside" might have to confront. For example, a prisoner does not have control of her or his diet; or she or he might be forced to share a cell, increasing her or his exposure to opportunistic infections. To meet the special needs of a prisoner with HIV/AIDS:

17. The special dietary needs of prisoners with HIV/AIDS (because of either illness or therapeutic programs) must be met.

18. The comfort needs of prisoners with HIV/AIDS (e.g. extra clothing or blankets) must be met.

19. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS should be given sensitive, humane, and compassionate treatment when being escorted outside the prison.

Some prisoners with HIV/AIDS will be in need of practical assistance, without being so ill as to require hospitalization. In such cases:

20. Special programs must be established for prisoners with HIV/AIDS who are suffering from AIDS-related illnesses and who are ineligible for medical parole/probation.

Of course, it is best for people who have HIV/AIDS to spend as little time as possible in prison. They have better access to medical and social services on the "outside" and they are more likely to maintain their health if they remain in their communities. A sentence for someone with a life-threatening illness is qualitatively harsher than the same sentence given to a healthy person. Reduced sentences and early releases are justifiable on humanitarian grounds. Thus:

21. Sentencing guidelines for judges and prosecutors regarding people living with HIV/AIDS need to be developed.

22. A compassionate release and/or medical parole/probation program should be developed for prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

23. HIV-related information in the possession of medical providers should be released to prison authorities only under extraordinary circumstances and only with the consent of the prisoner.

24. The confidentiality of all prisoners' HIV-antibody status (whether positive or negative) must be respected. Staff members who break the confidentiality of prisoners should be disciplined and/or fired.

25. The distribution of medications should not require a breach of the confidentiality of prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

26. Prisoners who want access to supportive counselling, medical treatment, etc., must be guaranteed that their confidentiality will be respected.

Currently it is all too common for prisoners who are known to have HIV/AIDS to be forcibly isolated. Guards, administrators, and other inmates are often under the illusion that they are safe from possible infection if all those known to be HIV positive are segregated. Education is the best method for addressing these irrational fears:

27. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS should not be involuntarily isolated or segregated.

People outside of the prison system are able to keep their HIV status confidential because they can use the anonymous HIV-antibody testing program recently implemented by the Ontario government. This program must be expanded to include prisoners:

28. HIV-antibody testing of inmates must be done voluntarily and anonymously.

29. Testing should be carried out by "outside" community-based agencies.

When someone knows her or his HIV status, he or she is able to make decisions regarding possible medical interventions to prevent and/or delay the onset of serious illness. Prisoners will more likely choose to be tested if they know they have options should they test positive.

30. HIV-antibody testing must be accompanied by access to medical monitoring and treatment (when necessary).

A spectrum of support services should be available to prisoners with HIV/AIDS, starting at intake, throughout incarceration, and after release. Thus, HIV/AIDS issues need to be integrated into existing aftercare programs:

31. Parole Officers, Probation Officers, workers in halfway houses, and other aftercare workers must be educated about AIDS.

32. Exit kits with HIV/AIDS information, contacts with community-based organizations, condoms, bleach kits, etc. must be made available to prisoners when they are released from correctional facilities.

Any programs for prisoners with HIV/AIDS while incarcerated must continue to be available to them upon release:

33. Programs providing continuity of care after release must be established for prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

34. Any special programs used by a prisoner with HIV/AIDS must remain available to her or him outside of prison.

35. Community-based groups must be involved with the development and implementation of aftercare strategies.

36. The Ministry of Correctional Services and CSC should work with community-based HIV/AIDS housing programs and service organizations to ensure that they meet the needs of ex-prisoners.

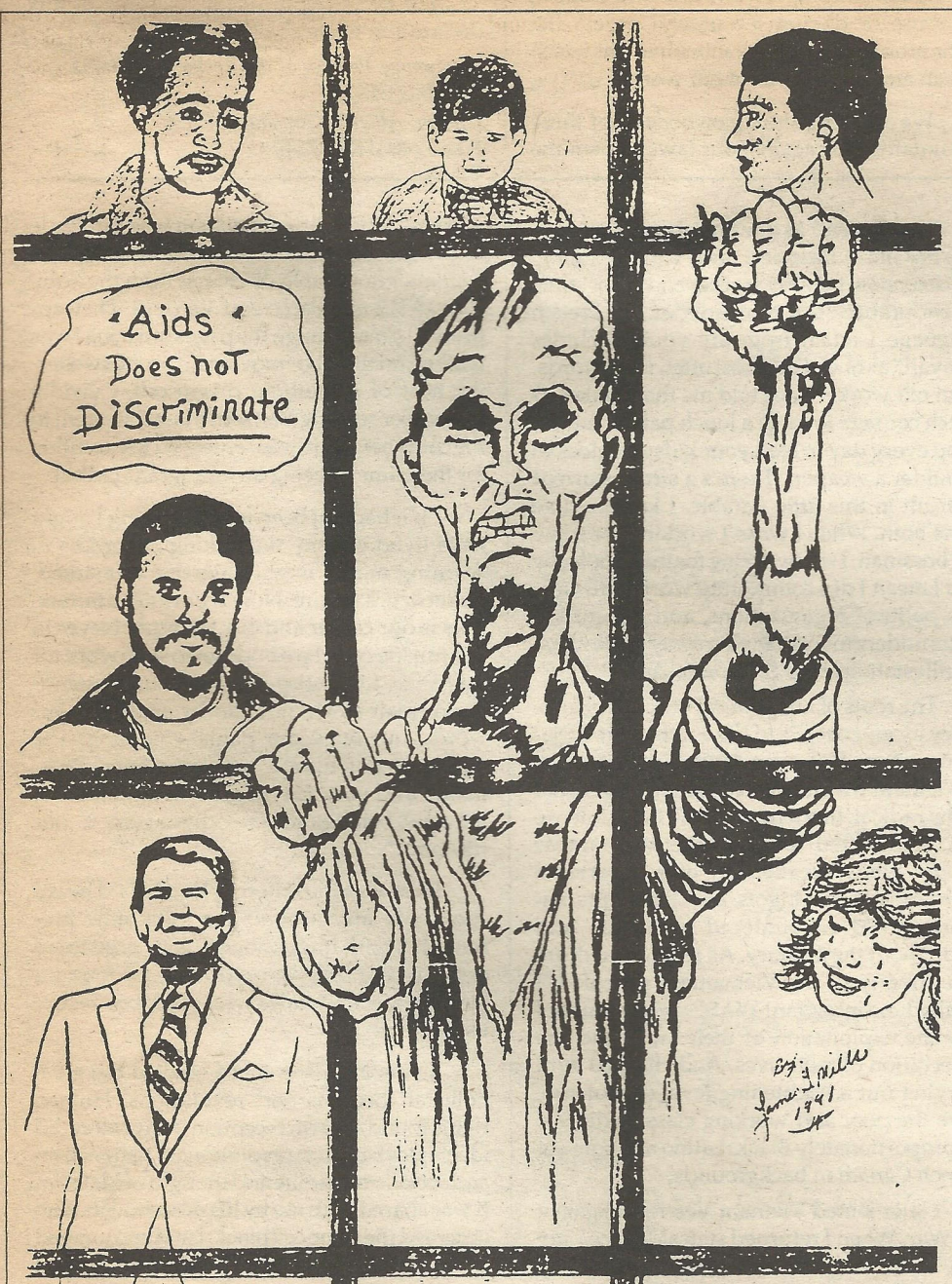
Women prisoners and HIV/AIDS

37. Education and prevention information must be culturally sensitive and gender specific.

38. A broad range of prevention materials, addressed specifically to women, must be made available in such a way as to protect prisoners' confidentiality.

39. Women with HIV/AIDS must have access to appropriate treatments and hospital care.

40. Women with HIV/AIDS must have access to "outside" resources such as counsellors and facilitators who are culturally and ethnically appropriate. ∞



Artwork by James G. Nillis, 1991, from "Prisoner's Perspectives" in the PWA Coalition Newsline

Declaration of sovereignty from the Indigenous Peoples of the Rocky Mountains to the governments of Canada, Alberta, the United States of America and the world.

1992 marks 500 years of European domination in the western hemisphere, and for the indigenous peoples of the Rocky Mountains and northern plains it will be a time for total emancipation from the alien laws that have disallowed us to live as we were instructed to by the *Great Mystery*.

We have witnessed your concept of sovereignty and civilization which allows air, water, earth and yourselves to be poisoned, raped and despiritualized so that your children inherit the curse you refer to as your culture. The earth is our government, and the natural laws of the creation we have chosen



to honour and live by give us our sovereignty. Our people have lived sovereignty in this western hemisphere for at least thirty thousand years because of our belief system

Going back a mere one hundred years to the time of your industrial revolution in our homelands, the earth and our people have been victims of serious and unnecessary destruction, to the extent that your own scientists have announced that you must change your unnatural and unclean ways or you will not survive another decade.

We cannot relate to "Canada" because it represents colonial oppression, industrial and corporate greed, and a people out of balance living in distress and uncertainty. The origin of the word "Canada" derives from the word "kanata" which in our language means clean. For us to accept being Canadian is therefore to accept not only the pollution of our language but to include ourselves among those who have turned this beautiful country into the unclean state it is in today. You would be well-advised to listen to those concerned people among you who are offering safe and healthy alternatives to your dangerous and life-threatening ways.

Our people have historically accessed the Rocky Mountains and ceased to do so only because of the imposition of your "Indian Act" and your fraudulent "treaties" which we were forced to sign or face extermination.

The day is over for our people existing in "third world" conditions created by you and further perpetrated through your racist governmental policies. We will begin to occupy the Rocky Mountains in the province of Alberta as we are aware of the water diversion conspiracy between the governments of the US, Canada and the province of Alberta. We will not allow you to divert the rivers to the south because they do not belong to you and were not placed on this earth to accommodate your schemes. These Rocky Mountains have always been and will continue to be our sacred spiritual centre, so it should be well understood by all why we will defend them with our very lives. We will obey the laws of our nation and stop anyone who will come in to abuse or disrupt the natural order. The natural order includes the animal nations which are an inseparable part of our world.

We are not claiming ownership of these mountains; it is against our laws to own the

earth. We are informing you, however, that no government or corporation in this world will ever again be allowed to impose their alien legalistic policies of destruction in our homeland. All people are welcome to access these mountains and experience the beauty and power of our common mother, but we will not tolerate any further desecration of our holy land.

The political terminology used to determine the status and rights of our people will no longer apply. We know who we are, and we will not permit neo-colonialists to further misrepresent us by begging for recognition from you through a constitutional process which you cannot even agree upon amongst yourselves. Any harassment whatsoever from any branch of your governments, directed toward our people, will be interpreted as an act of aggression and will be dealt with immediately by our nations' defenders.

If you wish to deal with us in a court of law, we will gladly accommodate you through a world tribunal held in our territory with all the other nations present to witness your reply to the charge of genocide.

In conclusion, we would like you to understand that we have serious concerns for our children's future and that future depends on our ability to honour the earth by protecting the natural world of which we are a part. For non-indigenous peoples and governments, we invite you to learn from us for the good of your children's future and to restore balance and sanity to the people of the earth.

To the government of Canada: we invite your representatives to abandon their arrogance and misconceptions of our people and begin to listen and learn from us, for we have much to offer you in ways of finding solutions to the problems you have created. We have been watching you stumble through your constitutional talks and we clearly see how secularly humanized you have become, so we will, in closing, offer you some advice which to our people is a living philosophy: A constitution that is in harmony with the earth will bring harmony to the people of the earth. ∞

For an in-depth understanding of this declaration write or phone:

Indigenous Peoples of the Rocky Mountains
P.O. Box 5157
Hinton, Alberta, Canada T7V 1X5
Phone (403) 865-7549

My blood is Quebecois

The following is an edited version of a talk by Ray Levasseur to a gathering of Franco-Americans. We found both this and the preceding article from Hinton, Alberta to be interesting counter-perspectives to the Canadian government's railroading of the nations' peoples into a constitutional deal which contains serious flaws.

My name is Raymond Luc Levasseur. Luc is my peperes name, which I carry with Franco pride. I come from a long line of mill workers, and grew up in the overbearing shadow of textile mills and shoe factories of Southwestern Maine. My father was born in the Quebec nation. We called ourselves French Canadian, or simply French, and that's what others called us. Our detractors held a different perspective and referred to us as "frogs" or "maudive (godamn) canucks." Those were fighting words then, and they are now.

It has always felt natural for me to refer to myself as French Canadian. To think of myself this way. What it means to me is that my blood is Quebecois. We didn't use the term Franco-American when I was coming up. ... I realize that the hyphenated American signifies assimilation into the American landscape, if not the American dream. While I do not deny the reality of assimilation, neither will I deny the moral bankruptcy and nightmare that America is for many of us.

... My grandparents went to work in the textile mills at 13 and 14 years. My mother and father went into those mills at 16. My turn came at 17... at the time my immediate co-workers were mostly French-Canadian... we worked in

the shell of the old Goodall mills -- a miserable runaway shop that fled South, destroying unions in its wake. We had no union protection and it showed. The pay was low, the work demanding, and the conditions hazardous. Speed up was used to maximize exploitation. To resist the debilitating effects of this speed up my French Canadian brethren introduced me to the proverbial shoe -- le sabot -- with which we jammed the machines. It was my first act of sabotage, but a long way from my last. Our immediate objective was to draw the line at how many shoe heels we'd have to produce per hour, beyond which the task became increasingly exhaustive and dangerous. We had our dignity, and in this small way, sought to dispel the power that the mills held over us -- mills that we commonly believed were owned by wealthy Anglos from out of state.

... Being of French Canadian blood and working class has impacted on my view of the American political/economic system and society. I was told to strike back at those who made ethnic slurs about us, and I did. Still, I heard the insulting remarks about us as being stupid, lazy and papist dominated. But how was I to strike back at the mills and factories that exploited us -- besides breaking the windows of their abandoned buildings, as we did as kids?

To me, the French and class identity were inseparable ... the only work was in a dead end job in a non-union mill. At age 17, with limited options, I left Maine and followed Route 95 to Boston where I found work on the waterfront loading docks.

I've worked as a wage laborer throughout my life -- factories, farm work, logging, construction, tannery worker and other stints of endurance. The remnants of the French language I retain from my youth includes "travail" as one of the most often used words. ... an old worker once told me that it takes as much courage to carry a lunch pail to a sweat shop every day to feed your kids as it does to shoulder a weapon. There's a strong current of truth in this little parable. I know -- I've done both. When I wasn't working for some big bossman, I was working for the people. By this I mean I did community work with various political organizations, and I spent ten years underground banging away at the worst manifestations of U.S. imperialism.

The roots of my political vision and militancy extend deep into life as a French Canadian worker. However, it was a tour of duty in Vietnam which led me from the provincial to the radical. In Vietnam, 1967, I saw intense racism directed towards the Vietnamese people, which recalled my own experience with anti-French bigots and the white supremacy I'd encountered in Boston and throughout the military. As I saw the culture and poverty of the Vietnamese ridiculed, I recalled the intolerant WASPs of my youth. I saw the exploitation of their labor and the desecration of their lives. And charged with carrying out a frightening level of violence, were the poor and working class soldiers -- disproportionately Black, Latino and some of French Canadian backgrounds.

I later joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War. When I returned stateside I took my new consciousness and became politically active in Tennessee. I quickly became involved in opposition to the war, civil right and a strike by black and white packinghouse

workers. My political activism was a prelude to prison, which is where I found myself a year after honorable discharge from the army ... in 1970 I met Sacco and Vanzetti. They appeared to me through the pages of a book I was reading on the labor movement, in the sweltering heat of a southern prison cell. I vividly remember reading Vanzetti's last statement to the court before he was sentenced to execution for the crime of being an immigrant radical:

"If it had not been for these thing I might have lived out my life talking at corners to scorning men. I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man as we now do by accident. Our words, our lives, our pains -- nothing! The taking of our lives -- lives of a good shoemaker and poor fish peddler -- all! That last moment belongs to us -- that agony is our triumph."

Here was the faltering English I'd heard spoken in and around the mills now presented in an impassioned and principled defense of immigrant workers ... I found a kindred spirit in those who sacrificed before us and with us.

It was in prison that I studied the great political theorists and revolutions. Human rights found a warm reception in my cell as did ideologies based on revolutionary nationalism and socialism. The life and thought of Malcolm X was shared with me by his descendants who occupied the same cell block. I was encouraged by the activities of the Black Panther Party and ecstatic with the resurgence of the Front de Liberation du Quebec.

continued on page 19

"If then, these negroes are not slaves, but are kidnapped and illegally detained and restrained; there is no pretence to say, that they are pirates or robbers. We may lament the dreadful acts by which they asserted their liberty; but they cannot be deemed pirates or robbers in the sense of the law of nations."

The Amistad Case, 15 Peters 518 (1841)

"There is no exception to an important rule. That rule is... Freedom for the oppressed must be won by the oppressed themselves."

Dr. Imari Abubakari Obadele, PGRNA

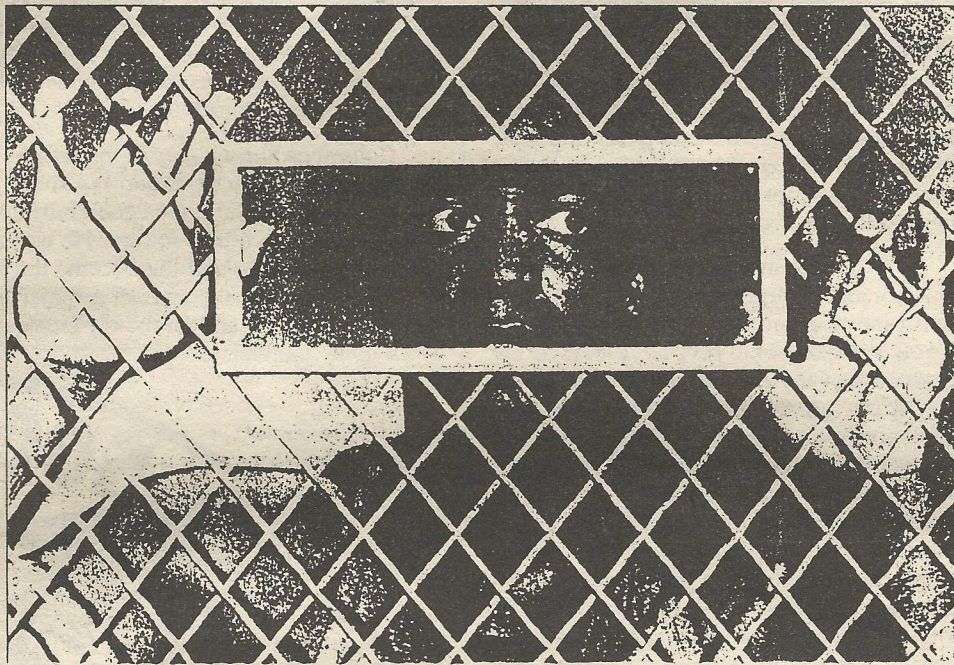
On July 7, 1991, nine Black men being held as prisoners of the state of Texas, u.s.a., formally organized the New Afrikan Peoples Action Committee (formerly New Afrikan Prisoners and Peoples Action Committee).

The NAPAC is an "organization dedicated to gaining the release of New Afrikan (Black) Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War ... principally by having Our people released to a Nation-State in Afrika and/or Cuba. We are also dedicated to prisoners rights and to the prevention of Black people becoming prisoners of the enemy in the first place. And, to the re-education and re-construction of the 'niggah' and the constructive use of the peoples talents and skills for the betterment of themselves, their families, their communities, the Black Nation and the world." That quote is from Our Statement of Purpose.

Our Statement goes on to say, "The NAPAC is firmly and resolutely committed to the uplifting and the equality of Our (Black) women and to the end of the exploitation and domination of Our (Black) women."

It is Our position that based upon Our (Black peoples) historical evolution in this country -- Our political legal, social, etc., circumstances in this country, -- We are a separate and distinct, colonized and oppressed nation, within a hostile state -- the u.s.a. We also have a state structure -- government and army -- to protect the Black Nation which is internationally recognized as such and We have internationally recognized National Liberation Organizations. Taking those factors and combining them with the factors of the u.s. 13th amendments "freeing" Us from chattel slavery in 1865 and International Law precedents and U.N. Resolutions 1514 and 1541, we stand upon the analysis of Our government, the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika and Our National

Action committee formed to free Black prisoners



Liberation Organization, the New Afrikan Peoples Organization and that is that We are not citizens of the u.s. and that We fall under the protections of International Law and that due to u.s. lawlessness there has been and is an illegal and immoral imposition of jurisdiction upon Our people.

Therefore, Our Freedom Fighters, Political Prisoners, Prisoners of War and Our basic Black prisoner, as Our people in general, must be dealt with within the framework of International Law; Our people being held as prisoners must be released; We must be allowed to determine for Ourselves what We want to do as it concerns Our future as a people; and Reparations must be paid to Us.

A simple formula for understanding Our actions is this: If We (Black People) were indeed freed by the 13th amendment, then no one can come back three years later and tell Us what We've got to do! (This is what was done with the ratification of the 14th amendment in 1868. They did not interpret it as an offer. They "made" Us citizens). If, then, We are not allowed a choice and are still "made" to do things that We may not have

wanted to do then there is no true freedom and certainly the right to self-determination has been made null and void. It is a continuation of slavery and an illegal imposition of jurisdiction. Some of Our people have "renounced" their "citizenship". Our position is that there is no citizenship to renounce. The only thing it can be is a matter of whether We want to accept the offer.

Although it was Black men who organized the NAPAC We are by no means another narrow-minded, sexist, male dominated formation. It is Our position that Black Women must be included in every aspect of the Black Nations affairs: from the leadership to the soldiering. We work from the principal fact that just as it takes a man and a woman to create a life it is going to take the Black woman and Black man to liberate the Black Nation. Therefore, We have within the organizational structure of NAPAC a Sister/Brother Chair, Vice-Chair, Information Collective, etc. So, there is no reason for the Sisters not to take their rightful place in their organization.

We are not limited in Our scope as to what needs to be done, what We can do and

what We are going to do. It is Our position that the New Afrikan Liberation Movement began close to four hundred years ago when the very first Afrikans being held as slaves on this land resisted their captors and captivity. It has been a long, hard fight and it's going to be a long hard fight, but We believe that the Black Nations victory is a foregone conclusion, therefore We are organized on multiple fronts.

We recognize that there are a multitude of problems facing the New Afrikan (Black) Nation that have to be addressed: mis-education, apathy, poverty, drug abuse, child, Women and Elder abuse, etc. The NAPAC is designed to work on resolving these problems within the framework of the Black Liberation Movement. That is to say that while Our objectives are the release of Our Freedom Fighters, etc., and the care and reconstruction of Our prisoners during and after imprisonment, We will also be saving Black Children, Women, Men, Families and Communities, simultaneously, from the total destruction that immediately threatens Our survival from within and without.

The NAPAC is a comprehensive and inclusive effort. A most practical and feasible endeavor. It therefore becomes obvious that We all need each other, for survival, whether one agrees with Our politics totally or not.

We are asking those who would to set forth and join Us; for those who would not join, to help and support Us; when one of Our committee is working on a project you feel comfortable with, then promote it. We are calling for your support.

For Our Declaration; Statement of Purpose; Organizational Structure and what you can do to help, or join Us; for Our Newsletter, the NAPAC Quarterly Information Sheet; for books from the House of Songhay Pub. Co.; for info on video and audio tapes from the New Afrikan Peoples Organization; for info on the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika. ∞

*from the Information Collective, NAPAC
Prince Imari A. Obadele, Chairman*

Contact us

NAPAC c/o House of Songhay
P.O. Box 691871
Houston, Texas 77269-1871
713-370-8361
504-357-7909

Montana cont'd. from page 3

control cages, allowing the Max prisoners access to the whole unit. The blood of the dead men is directly attributable to the way in which the prison was run, yet it is prisoners,

who may or may not be personally responsible for the actual deaths, who are going to pay the price of the administrators incompetence.

As of this writing, the Max prisoners have no access to programs and no "privileges" at all. Native prisoners still have no

right to participate in their spiritual ceremonies, even though there is a sweat lodge on the prison grounds. They continue to be denied sweetgrass, eagle feathers and other religious items. The state does provide bibles free to Max prisoners. Twenty-five percent of the prisoners in Deer Lodge are native, yet there is not one Native working at the prison.

The NIC report, apparently written by what passes for liberals in American penology, thoroughly condemned the management of the prison, the near total lack of training for guards and the backward nature of the employees. Western Montana, where the prison is located, and from where the prison employees are drawn, was reported by the Civil Rights Commission as having one of the highest rates of hate crimes and number of hate groups in the nation. The U.S. Health Services named Montana as having the poorest record for caring for mentally dysfunctional people in the country. Many of these people ended up in the Deer Lodge prison.

Support is still needed for the six men who have yet to go on trial, and for the struggle in the prison for native religious rights, and rights for prisoners in general. Legal fees are being partially covered by the sale of Scott Seelye's art work in Germany. Native support groups are selling t-shirts in both North America and Europe:

*For more information write,
In the U.S.*

Bobby Castillo
American Indian Movement Council
2940 16th St. Rm 104
San Francisco, CA 94110
call (415) 626-1875

In Europe:

Angela Warsitz
Emststr 62
1000 Berlin 27
Germany
call 49-30435-1712

In Canada:

Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (Canada)
43 Chandler Dr.
Scarborough, Ont M1G 1Z1
call (416) 439-1893

Donations for legal expenses can be sent to Scott Seelye's father:

Jack Seelye
P.O. Box 13
Bena, MN 56626
Call (218) 665-2342 Home
(218) 335-8200 Office

Letters protesting the abusive treatment under which the Max prisoners are held; the racist treatment of Chicano and Native prisoners; and the denial of spiritual freedom for Native Prisoners, can be written to:

Curt Chisholm
Director
Department of Corrections
1539 11th Ave.
Helena, MT 59620

Warden John McCormick
Montana State Prison
700 Conley Lake Rd.
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

Thanks to Scott Seelye for this information. Write:

Scott Seelye #27574
700 Conley Lake Rd,
Deer Lodge, MT 59722 ∞



Columbus lied

*"Columbus lied
Columbus lied
He told everybody he discovered America,
What a whole lot of fantasy.
Maybe he thought the Indians were fantasy
Columbus lied
Columbus lied..."*

So goes the first verse of a popular calypso song heard not only in the Caribbean Islands, but increasingly across the U.S. as well. It is a small part of the opposition to the upcoming 'official' government-sponsored 500th anniversary celebrations of Columbus's arrival in the Americas.

The 'official' festivities sponsored by the governments in the U.S., Spain, Dominican Republic and other countries primarily seek to glorify Columbus as a discoverer. They also want to highlight benefits that Europe and its culture brought to the Americas then and the fruits of that 'discovery' now — namely the U.S.A. as it's ultimate outcome.

Columbus certainly did lie. He lied to his sponsors, the Spanish monarch, about things like how much gold he was finding. While huge mineral wealth did exist in places like the Incan Empire in Peru, the Caribbean Islands where Columbus plundered were not especially rich in gold or precious stones.

More importantly Columbus lied to the people who welcomed him to their land, the Native Indian people. While telling them of the power and mysteries of the Spanish King and the Christian Church, he was already scheming about taking the Indians' wealth and land and enslaving the people themselves. In short order Columbus and his men were stealing their gold, taking their land, raping the women, enslaving large numbers of men, women and children and killing anyone who resisted — all in the name and for the greater glory of Spain and the Catholic Church. Columbus was in fact a conqueror and plunderer, not a discoverer.

The pillaging of Columbus occurred five centuries ago. World history has many examples of conquest and plunder, so one may ask: what is the contemporary significance of

Columbus and this 500th anniversary? Truth and historical authenticity would be reason enough to put many of the Columbus myths to rest. More significantly, while Columbus is long dead, his legacy is not. Columbus's exploitative spirit lives on — with a vengeance. It is for these reasons that many, many people in the U.S. and worldwide are demanding revisions in, if not flat out opposing, the 'official' Columbus anniversary events.

The European conquest of the Americas was not just incorporating one piece of land into some other empire after a war or imposing a new ruler on some people. It marked the beginning of the rise of Europe as the main world power, the primitive accumulation necessary for capitalism and the large scale rise of slavery, particularly the kidnapping and dispersal of millions upon millions of Africans as slaves. It was all founded on the theft of the resources and land of the indigenous people of America and on what may be one of humankind's most sanguinary and total genocides — the literal extermination of tens of millions of Native American people. Within 50 years of Columbus's arrival on the island of Hispaniola, there were literally no Taino Indian people left alive there! It is estimated that up to 3 million people may have lived on the islands Columbus first conquered. For the Americas as a whole, perhaps 100 million-plus indigenous people died as a result of the European invasions. In the United States, in North America, there are fewer than 2 million Native Indian people today. Five hundred years ago it is estimated that between 20 and 60 million Indians lived in this area alone. The same is true for all other areas of the Americas.

Slavery, occupation and the taking of land, cultural and physical genocide, these are the foundations and legacy of Columbus and the European conquest. They continue today as colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism — as in the 'new world order'.

Just as Columbus did not regard the customs, culture and lives of the Tainos as worthy or relevant, so today do the West and the U.S. in particular continue to consider the culture and lives of non-white people as infe-

rior or not relevant. This is true whether they are Native Indian people living in the U.S., Puerto Ricans in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico, Salvadorans in El Salvador, Blacks in South Africa or Third World people anywhere. It began with Columbus's arrival and it continues with the myths and lies about him and the entire history of European colonizing since. The upcoming 'official' government-sponsored 500th anniversary Columbus events are but a continuation of this lie.

Columbus himself may or may not have been much of a man or leader. We know he was an inept governor, not a good businessman and not much of a soldier. He was an accomplished sailor and did become the actual point man for the start of a major expansion of Spanish, and ultimately European as a whole, colonialism.

The meeting of the European world and the Americas was a momentous event in world history. The last 500 years of a European and U.S.-dominated world has seen incredible advances in most areas of life. It has also seen incredible suffering, murder and waste. The pillaging of the earth and most of its peoples, as was established by Columbus on his arrival, continued and continues. Whether we've already gone beyond repairable bounds is unknown. What we do know is that the planet and the large majority of its people cannot stand for the next 500 years to be in the tradition of Columbus. ∞

*Jaan Laaman #10372-016
Ohio-7 political prisoner
P.O. Box 1000*



*"The meeting of the
Condor and the Eagle,
representing North and South Mesoamerica."*

Graphic by Gord H., from Oh-Toh-Kin

Control in Canadian prisons

With the actions against control units happening in May, I feel obliged to speak out about, and against, the brutal and inhumane conditions at the 'Induction' unit at Millhaven Penitentiary at Kingston, Ontario. Every prisoner sentenced to 2 years or more is transferred there after sentencing. It is now considered to be 'reception' for all federal prisoners for the Ontario region. Originally built to house a Special Handling Unit, Millhaven was opened

prematurely after a riot at the old Kingston pen which could no longer house prisoners because a four day smash-and-burn by prisoners left it wrecked — as all prisons should be.

Millhaven is not unlike Marion. It has the highest security rating in Canada and is referred to as a super-max. From the outside, it looks exactly the same as Marion. Prisoners in the Induction unit are confined to their cells for 23 & 1/2 hours a day, and only come out for a shower three times a week, and sometimes for a half-hour yard-up.

While Millhaven is regarded as a reception centre, it is in fact a control unit where prisoners go through a period of induction. A prisoner's stay before transfer to any one of the eight federal prisons in the region is determined by their ability to adjust their being to the ultimate repression of prison. (During my stay there, I wrote to a friend that whatever they were trying to induce wasn't working for me, because it took me seven months to get to another maximum security prison.) Most prisoners stay there from three to six weeks, but some serve their whole sentences there.

That's just what control units are all about. A place

where they try to force attitude changes. If you toe the line and don't fight back against the abuses and harsh conditions, then you move on to prisons where you get more 'privileges'. If you don't take any shit, then you stay locked in a cage. (There is no proof, but my transfer seemed to result from a number of legitimate grievances I filed with administrative prisonrats, with carbon copies sent to the appropriate politicians. They realized they couldn't provoke me physically and their tactics of antagonism, humiliation, cell shakedowns, loss of television, no access to library, rectal searches (to name only a few) were useless. I mean what were they going to do? Put me in jail? I was already in the shittiest place I could be in.

The physical reality is that you are locked in a very small space with another prisoner. In that space, you have enough room to do push-ups on the floor. Otherwise it takes about three seconds to sweep the place up. Besides a double bunk, there is a desk, sink and toilet. You have no choice but to shit right where you are eating. The door opens three times a day so you can pick up your meals, and then locks again automatically. No screws are around when prisoners are out of their cells unless they come en masse to escort a prisoner somewhere or to adjust someone's attitude.

So you sit in this cage all day and hopefully you get along with the person they bunked you with. They will often put you with someone you can't relate to, let alone get along with, and many a fight breaks out even in the confined space of the cage I described. This is so the screws can sit in the tower and play cards, while prisoners are pitted against each other for the "attitude adjustment". If you get along, you might talk about something meaningful, but good luck. Remember, everyone is terrified in this place, so you have

to make up good stories to impress people. After you hear enough bullshit, you end up sleeping for much of the time. There is television, but not every cell has one, and they seem to 'break' during cell searches quite a lot.

The psychological reality is that you wonder just exactly what you could have done to deserve such cruelty. The screws come by every few hours to look through the tiny window in the metal door and have a laugh at your expense. They count prisoners as if they were priceless jewels, yet they treat you like shit. Every once in a while they come to trash your cell. The pretext is to search for contraband, as though you were out last night and came back with a bomb or gun. And if you react to their calling you slime and piece of shit, then you better know how to recover from broken bones without seeing a doctor or getting painkillers. Just when you begin to relax, thinking they aren't going to kill you then and there, the cell door crashes open and they are in your face again. Heaven forbid you should smile and say 'good day officer' as they will think you're on drugs, and it is shakedown time again. And there's no point in even describing how humiliating rectal searches are.

Induction at Millhaven is certainly no picnic. It is the ultimate notion of control no matter how you look at it. There is not one minute during a stay there that you feel you did something to deserve the treatment and only after a big fight will you be able to maintain any sort of self-respect. Except the fight puts you deeper into the shit, and it is no small wonder that most succumb to the attitude adjustment it is designed to induce. ∞

*Zoltan Lugosi
Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre*



Why administrators promote prison riots

The Terre Haute (Indiana) Federal Penitentiary is like any other business when pressed for expansion funding and faced with cutbacks. Unfortunately for us prisoners, you taxpayers and those few employees unlucky enough to be caught within the explosion area, it means that in order for more funds to be allocated one of two things must occur: A court order to meet the constitutionally required standard of care for human beings in custody, or the first priority of "Security Needs".

Therefore, one of the oldest tactics in the business is to create conditions that will guarantee a high degree of tension, frustration, idleness, and crowding, and then sit back and wait for a spark to ignite it. Then the people who created the violence and destruction can demand higher danger pay and unmonitored security construction allocations.

What do officials do to create such tensions? First, they transfer large numbers of English/Spanish speaking African prisoners to an isolated prison like Terre Haute, making it very difficult for 99% of their families to visit, in a state where 100% of the administrators are European-Americans. Then they eliminate all cultural, education, religious, music and counselling contacts with our communities, even prohibiting directories or telephone books. Prisoners are forced to re-

port to work assignments where they can only sit, sleep, make intoxicants, weapons



and other contraband because there aren't enough employees to supervise all the slave labor. They provide no educational leisure-time activities after those forced work hours each day, just a constant mental diet of violence, MTV and sports TV. All but those with the longest sentences, or serving life, are excluded from having a single cell. This encourages violent, unprovoked attacks, normally upon other prisoners, by the most dangerous anti-social types with living death-sentences, in order to obtain some privacy to read, think and create reasons to not give up from time to time throughout the years.

With all these tensions in place, officials just make themselves scarce for the short time it takes for the frustrations, idleness and intoxicants to ignite and your tax dollars are burnt up in the millions before it's over. For example, hundreds of prisoners must be transferred around the country, under extensive security of course and enormous overtime salaries; prosecutions are carried; sick leave with pay for prison guards convalescing from injuries received while putting down the explosion; and, sadly, sometimes funds are spent for the burial of the victimized people.

So much effort is put into the opposite things here at Terre Haute, from what is done at their other penitentiaries that it removes any doubt as to the purpose. Therefore, when it explodes, as other federal prisons have in 1991, and every few months this year, for the same reasons, officials will meet no resistance in obtaining your tax dollars to increase staff and rebuild an economy in recession.

Despite the trauma to many people's lives at each explosion, it is deemed a necessary consequence of the prison business. You know! "You can't make an omelet without breaking a few good eggs."

What can you do about it? First check these facts. Then find out why this is being done at Terre Haute. They can't tell you the truth, and a rational explanation is hard to fit. Make your Senators and Congresspeople aware that you want to know what's being done at Terre Haute to prevent, instead of encouraging, explosions. Knowing that you are no longer asleep to their business practices could reduce prison costs to you while enabling prisoners to better educate and train themselves to become contributing society members, i.e., the 99% of us who will be returning to our communities. The federal government must start using the same cost-cutting practices as many states use. Check and learn what they are.

What's in this for me? I may survive to once again be with, and this time, support my family, after being uneducated enough as a foolish teenager to believe that there was profit in robbing people. There is only profit in crime for those working for the law enforcers and who have a badge and fraternalism that shields them from jail if caught. This is the current view from inside regarding the riot games federal prison people play. ∞

Dr. Emory Chana #11416-050
P.O. Box 33
Terre Haute, IN 47808

On the legal front: win some, lose some Guards have *PNS* envy

We are pleased that prisoner-subscribers and Bulldozer have had a couple of victories in our fight against prison censorship. Since the last issue went out, control units at Clallam Bay in Washington state, and Ionia in Michigan, have both acknowledged that they did not have sufficient grounds for rejecting our last issue, #36.

It is little wonder that most of the prisons which ban us, are the prisons which have been featured in our pages. Shaka Shakur's page-one article in issue # 36 in which the brutality, sensory deprivation and racism in the Control Unit at Westville, Indiana was documented, was rejected from that prison, as though it were dangerous for prisoners to read about what they live through 24 hours a day. We have also covered prisoner resistance in New Jersey prisons, as have other papers. In order to combat the truth, N.J. has issued a blanket ban on *PNS* and seven other publications, including our friends at *Arm The Spirit* and *Love and Rage*. Other papers on the banished include the *Black Panther Community News Service*, *Arm The Masses* and *MIM Notes*. New Jersey continues to prevent political papers from reaching subscribers even though a recent court decision ruled that the prison could not keep *MIM Notes* out. The ACLU in N.J. has found a lawyer to take up a legal challenge against this censorship. The state doesn't have a legal leg to stand on, but they can draw the fight out in order to keep prisoners in Rahway and Trenton from finding out what is going on in prisons around the continent.

But we are a newspaper. There is little in our pages that is not documented, or could not be documented. Prisoners need not make up stories of atrocities, they live them constantly. In the last issue, we ran a letter from Da'wud Ayatollah Clark-X which spoke about the Klan-guards and their open advocacy of white supremacy at Ionia. The paper was rejected but eventually appeals by Clark-X and Jerry Price, among others, were successful in having the rejection overturned. The following is from a letter from Price outlining some of the details.

Dear *PNS*:

Thanks for writing. I got a response to the letter I wrote to the Warden which was

turned over to Admin. Asst I. Williams for reply. His finding that there was no improprieties in the flagging of my mail or the impartiality (bias hearing). My administrative appeal process was to submit a grievance which I did that hasn't been responded to at the first step level. It seems I've become the center-of-attention for some reason or another. The correspondence courses I take in Esoteric studies (Christianity), and any other material, is supposedly detrimental to my fragile mind. But I'm not entrusted enough for my release from Michigan's #1 dungeon or to be let onto the street. I'm serving a life sentence without parole (Michigan's death roll) on installment. So much for that because I'm a black man in racist Klan Kountry and their obsession is in controlling and manipulating our every aspect of life from sun-up to sun-up the next morning.

Dig, what came out from the appeals. On August 16, '92 RUM Gerald Goor came to see me in my assigned cell. As I approached the door he handed me my issue of *PNS*. So why the change of mind? I asked what happened. He said he didn't see nothing wrong with the paper. It seems we got some new mail room staff who feel like they can reject any mail they don't like. But if you ask me, it's a conspiracy. Somebody is putting them up to rejecting certain types of mail. Whenever prisoners receive correspondence with other prisoners' writings, etc. And this is a supermax, so it's security they say. I didn't write to you right away because I was in a bit of shock after preparing the grounds for a battle. I was thinking, something ain't right. So I waited to see what surfaces.

They overturned themselves. Somebody wake-me up. I'm in a dream. On August 21, I got the official paper work, yep it's legit. This time it was from the deputy warden Pete Vider, the reporting staff: (Comments in brackets below are by Price. ed.)

Administrative Hearing Report (Form CSJ-144)
Nature of hearing — re-hearing regarding package/letter rejection #575.

Rejecting Staff statement: I have received your administrative hearing report and read the rejected paper (*Prison News Service*) numerous times and fail to see how

the paper violates PD-BCF-63.03 prisoner mail policy. The administrative hearing report must clearly show how the rejected periodical violates policy. This is accomplished by clearly stating which of the 12 listed items in PD-BCF-63.03 (pages 4 + 5) have been violated. That portion of the periodical that is in violation must then be xeroxed and highlighted. Again I fail to see how your administrative hearing shows that the *PNS* is in violation of policy.

Disposition: Rejection not upheld. The disposition of the hearing of 7-22-92 is reversed and the newspaper was distributed to prisoner Price.

Reason for Disposition: No violation of PD-BCF-63.03 was found.

Hearing officer: Gerald Goor.

Date of Disposition 8-16-92.

What I can make out of all this is that (Assist. Resident Unit Manager) ARUM Gary Bell's reason for rejecting the material in the first place was because the people up front didn't like it. Somebody in a higher position than he is, who he is trying to stay in good with for job security reasons. His reasons:

Disposition: -package will be held 30 days pending the prisoner's appeal, after that package will be sent to the inspector's office for disposal. A copy of this memo and the hearing will be submitted to deputy Vider's office for a request to Central Office for addition to the restricted publication list.

Reason for Disposition: This paper "*PNS*" is published by prisoners and includes articles from prisoners in other facilities. When a prisoner receives these publications they are reviewed to see if they violate policy. This paper does indeed violate PD-BCF-63.03. Policy states any materials advocating vio-

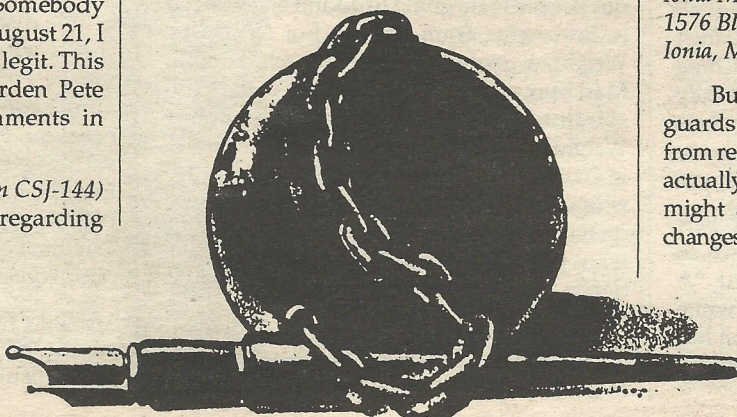
lence and disobeying rules or attacking a racial group. This issue May/June '92 on pg 1, pg 2 and pg 11 characterizes prison officials as racist and other. (No shit. I wonder how he or she views prison guards beating, gassing, lying and killing us?) This is in direct violation of this policy. (You can see by the words, the frame of mind we are dealing with here. This is a direct order etc. A real authoritarian, disciplinarian indoctrinated asshole.) ARUM Bell really made a complete 360 degree change from earlier not finding nothing wrong with the paper or it's articles to "this is a direct violation of this policy". Heil Hitler!!!

Very inconsistent and not in the man's character. So who's pushing the button. Prison staff are not only allowed but encouraged to give them hell. Beat 'em down! Lock 'em down! We are the enemy in the distorted mind. And we are suppose to accept without any dissent anything and everything they do. As Butler said to me the other day with his flag patch on his shirt sleeve with the yellow ribbon around the flag. "You see Price it's like this. You are a 'black' convict. I am a 'white' correctional officer. And I can do anything I want to do to you. Anything I say goes. We can take you down right now and say you tried to kick me or punch me. We can beat you down. Write you a misconduct, put you in detention and say you assaulted us."

But it ain't just Butler, it's the prison administrators and the public-at-large who's at fault. For closing their eyes, ears and hearts to a problem that they help produce and are in part responsible for. So the bottom line is this, for now they were forced to step down, but they will be preparing to attack again. Under the appearance and color of law. But it's about total submission for them — my absolute consent and acceptance of a lower depraved standard of the living dead.

Jerry Price #171022
Ionia Maximum Facility
1576 Bluewater Highway
Ionia, MI 48846

Bulldozer can only hope that the prison guards and administrators learn something from reading *PNS* as intently as they do. If they actually took what they read in it to heart, they might actually begin to make some of the changes that will reduce the high levels of racism and violence in the dungeons. We are encouraged that there are some officials who still, however reluctantly, make such decisions on the basis of the law and regulations, and not simply from their own narrow prejudice. ∞



Letters

Fighting for access for health care for diabetics

Dear Bulldozer,

Please change my address to reflect my new location. I've been so heavily involved in litigation (both for myself and other brothers and sisters) that I've barely had time to eat when the turnkey brings the tray. (Ad. Seg. as usual.) My old address was the Max dungeon in Pelican Bay. Well, had a civil action pending in federal court in the N.D. Cal., (Case No C-90-3105-D.L.J.). Lo and behold! Justice was accomplished and I was transferred here to California Medical facility. Believe me, it was not because the prisoncrats suddenly felt an overwhelming surge of warmth and compassion for me either. They just could no longer justify housing an insulin dependent diabetic with a brittle condition and a seizure disorder in a maximum security 'Lockdown Pen' that doesn't provide special diets in accordance with American Diabetics Assoc. standards (ADA). Ergo — 'ship him'! I was on the next bus smoking right out of the Pelican Bay infirmary. Quasi-injunctive relief if you will. The sort that allows the gestapo to worm their way out of the suit but I got what I wanted: out of Hell!

In the event that you can find room to squeeze this letter into one of your next editions to reflect a victory (albeit small), I would like to put other diabetics onto two people who truly give a damn about diabetics in prison. They are: my dear friends:



Mad Max (Bush) is a psycho, but he's running the place

Uhuru!

My Brothers and Sisters

It's it real easy for us to try as a people to put behind us the struggle for democracy in Los Angeles. (That's what they called it in Europe when the other man did it.) We must not abandon our brothers and sisters who President Bush (Mad Max in person) had locked up for political reasons. You must remember that Mad Max said he would do whatever it took to win re-election. That, coming from the Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces, is not a good sign. You must remember that when the people of China were shot down in the square and literally run over by the tanks on national T.V. in their struggle for democracy Mad Max said nothing because he wanted nothing said in return.

In the late 1800's when Judge Robert Taney, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in handling the Dred Scott case stated that, "A black man has no rights for which a white man is bound to respect." That decision has hung like an atomic cloud over this country ever since.

Dr. Corey Weinstein, M.D.
The Prisoners Rights Union
2308 "J" St.
P.O. Box 1019
Sacramento, CA 95812-1019

His long suffering assistance with letters to wardens, chief medical officers, etc. and underlying generosity and faith in my litigious endeavors helped to make it possible for me to obtain the proper care and diet I fought so hard for. And:

Lisa Murdock
American Diabetes Assoc.
2031 Howe St. #250
Sacramento, CA 95825

She also wrote letters for me to wardens, chief medical officers and the head quack here at the Department of Corrections, and also provided me with the ADA's Standards for Health Care in Corrections — an informative brochure on what prisons *should* provide for diabetics (Type I and Type II). If a prisoner has a serious problem with the health care in their facility, I strongly urge them to write to Dr. Weinstein no matter what state (or province) you're in and ask him to write letters for you. Sometimes a little outside influence will carry the day. Also should your problem concern diabetes, you can write to Ms. Murdock and request letters and a copy of the ADA's Standards.

For more information on case citings and the legal procedures one should focus on prior to litigation (not just in California), the Prisoners' Rights Union publishes *The California State Prisoners Handbook* which in addition to many California statutes and cases also contains a vast storehouse of assistance to prisoners anywhere.

Finally, brothers and sisters, let me say that you can't fight and win if you don't fight at all. So if you're satisfied to be treated worse than many zoo animals, just forget what I've written and call for another bowl of swill and bend over and cough.

On the other hand, if you're like me and thousands like me who just won't go for the establishment's okie dokie, seriously consider taking what cell time you have for familiarizing yourself with ways and means, rules, regulations, statutes, court rules, and case law so that you can at least have a fighting chance at securing the proper care you're entitled to. Remember, you can't play the game if you don't know what the rules are and a strong mind as well as a strong body is needed in the struggle for freedom from oppression. ∞

In solidarity!

Louis R. McCombs D-84267
California Medical Facility
P.O. Box 2000
Vacaville, CA 95696-2000

Be a bulldog, not a goldfish; We can know our own needs

Dear PNS

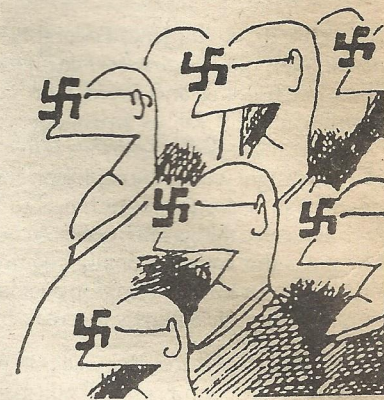
I would like to ask if you would place an article in the *PNS* concerning improving the system. There are some of us here who feel a change can take place, but only if we band together. The propaganda the system gives to the general public does little to help us inside the walls of oppression. The nickname given the prison I'm at is 'The Walls', even the guards use it and print it on shirts every year celebrating the prison being here. Police departments around the state buy and wear them also. This year marks 140 years. They've tried to have me help print the shirts but found I was prone to making mistakes and showed no interest in helping them further promote a prison that only benefits the staff.

The changing of the system needs to take place. It is plain that too many of us return, and we're the only ones who can come up with the answers concerning ourselves. We need to take action now!

I would like to quote an article printed in *Corrections Today*, July 1992, written by Lon E Curry, a correctional trainer with the South Carolina Department of Corrections. The magazine is for prison staff, mainly the administration. It promotes fewer rights for prisoners. Mr Curry states, "We need to look at our programs and institute some higher standards for our own profession before the courts decide to do it for us. Who knows our own needs better than those of us who deal with them every day? It can be done much more efficiently if we act before the courts." The article goes on about how staff should train more on how to shoot prisoners who might have escaped to the real world.

But the quote pertains to the same thing I am saying — who better to come up with the answers than we who are locked away? I would like ideas about how to change the system for the better, what types of programs would benefit a person before release so he would be less likely to return and what should be done or how to prevent our children from ending up inside the walls of oppression. I know I don't want mine here.

We in prison are like a giant think tank, we need to produce some strong ideas and give them to our families who can lobby on our behalf for the changes. We need to take steps for ourselves, but first we have to come up with ideas. There is a national group called CURE (Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants) that is working towards this. If anyone would like to write to me I would be



glad to send them info on CURE. The time is now before the hope is gone. We have to care for ourselves, for others, to care also, Take a stand and band together, do something ourselves. Don't lay down like the administration wants you to do. Be a Bulldog, not a goldfish. ∞

Sincerely,

Edward M. Dettinger #169167
Waupun Correctional Facility
P.O. Box 351
Waupun, WI 53963

Mr. Dettinger's ideas seem good to us. There is a substantial body of literature on some of the alternatives to prisons that could be, and are being, used to reduce the prison population and the high numbers of people who are returned to prison. *PNS* would be interested in running articles from prisoners, or reprinting articles from other papers, that deal with these issues. We also need ideas on how prisoners, and their supporters on the outside, can organize to present ideas and bring about change in an effective manner. Let's turn the prisons into think tanks for change. We will run into roadblocks set up by guards, administrators, politicians, judges or cops, but if our ideas are solid, and our organizations strong and principled, then we will have a real base to continue to struggle against all those who benefit from keeping things the way they are.

Let us know the names and addresses of outside organizations that you have found useful and helpful. They can either be on a national, state or local level. There are a lot of groups and organizations that are doing work around the theory and practice of alternatives to prisons. Use our pages to help prisoners connect with them. Groups can send a brief description of their purpose and activity. If we're sent articles on these topics, we'll publish them as well. (ed.)

be proven. They never accept blame for Black's environmental conditions which are clearly the result of white oppression. On the contrary, Blacks are held responsible for the deterioration of their communities even though all the property is White-controlled. In addition, municipal services are withdrawn from black communities and most of these communities have been 'used up' before Blacks are allowed to move into them."

In closing it should be mentioned as further proof that Mad Max and gang in the United States have achieved their "specified environment" as postulated by Watson and Skinner (mad psychologists themselves, ed.).

Therefore, they must be held accountable for the behavior of its inhabitants. There is little disagreement among behavioral scientists who attest to the fact that situations can be contrived in a manner which will influence people to engage in self-destructive behavior. Further, once it is determined that such a condition caused the behavior, the focus of attention shifts from the victim to the perpetrator except where Blacks are involved. Circumstances, conditions and situations are our people's defense!

Like PE said, "Shut 'em down." We as a people will be put on trial in L.A. I close with some disturbing truth if you think you are

free, silly one. Psychopaths also reject constituted authority and discipline. This has grave implications for Blacks who seek legal solutions to their problems. This especially applies to all Blacks in the United States who are the world's only legally created group, namely through the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments which can be repealed at any moment by the Congress or declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. As long as this condition exists, Black people in the United States will also be legally five minutes away from slavery. ∞

Lazima Tutashinda

Safwat Imani Shabazz #M5914
Box A
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Toronto readers!

Bulldozer could use some assistance in getting the paper out. Help is needed keypunching, preferably on a MacIntosh, and during the mailing, which, being the mindless activity that it is, allows us to hang out and talk. If you can help, drop us a line at:

Bulldozer
P.O. Box 5052, Stn A
Toronto, Ont M5W 1W4

Munich protests rock G-7 summit

This year's G-7 summit, the annual meeting of the leaders of the world's most powerful countries (the U.S., Canada, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, and Japan) didn't quite happen quite the same way as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had imagined. The first major meeting of the New World Order's policy makers hosted by reunited Germany was designed to boost the country's new superpower status. It turned into a double failure.

The highly publicized proceedings failed to produce tangible results. The seven leaders disagreed on issues such as interest rates, liberalized trade and agricultural policies as well as on how to deal with the Yugoslavian crisis. Germany continued to reject any requests to lower its interest rates and to help stimulate the world economy. The only major agreement contained in the G-7's final communiqué was a \$24 billion loan program to Russia and other former Soviet republics.

The G-7 summit also failed to dispel international concerns about the authoritarian and aggressive traits in the domestic and foreign policies of reunited Germany. Media coverage of the summit's opening ceremony on Monday, July 6th, was dominated not by cheering Bavarians clad in their traditional Lederhosen, but by graphic images of a police riot. When hundreds of militant protestors disrupted the national anthems with ear-splitting whistles and political chants against the New World Order such as "G-7-Internation-

Genocide Center!", they were brutally attacked by paramilitary anti-riot police. For several hours 500 demonstrators (including these writers) were encircled by heavily armed police. Although people linked arms, they were dragged away and arrested one by one. Many protestors were brutalized by the police, and held for up to 10 hours in overcrowded paddy wagons and a nearby police precinct. Among the victims of police brutality were many journalists, including the White House's staff photographer. After her unpleasant encounter with German state power, she was offered U.S. Secret Service protection against the German police.

Monday's mass arrests were meant to quell any street protests and disturbances for the duration of the three-day summit. Under state law, political activists can be held in preventative detention for up to 14 days if police can show that they intend to participate in militant political protest. However, this time a judge intervened and declared the arrests to be illegal. Chancellor Kohl openly expressed his anger at the judge's ruling: "People who insult Germany's guests by whistling at them are severely damaging Germany's reputation. They should be dealt with harshly."

The mass arrests capped a wave of unprecedented state repression against political dissent, particularly in the conservative southern state of Bavaria and its capital Munich, the prosperous center of Germany's



"The war is over, the struggle continues — solidarity with the FMLN": "Freedom for Leonard Peltier — We still have a long way to go. But my heart is strong, because I know, that I will be free one day, as will be all political prisoners and all people."

high tech and aerospace industries. During the G-7 meeting, Munich experienced a virtual state of siege. At least 9000 riot control police were called in from all over Germany. The police placed sharpshooters at highway overpasses and searched thousands of cars. Even some residents who wanted to leave Munich for the duration of the G-7 summit were arrested at the omnipresent roadblocks, because police suspected that their camping gear and barbecue equipment was to be used for molotov cocktails.

In the months leading up to the summit, police had broken up several panel discussions and public forums on the G-7's New World Order policies, claiming that such discussions were intended to "plan the committing of felonies." At one point even some members of the European Parliament protested the cops' strong-arm tactics and defended the meetings as part of an international mobilization for a three-day radical "counter-summit" in Munich immediately before the G-7 meeting.

This "International Conference Against the G-7 Summit" provided a forum for an international debate and exchange on the perspectives for radical leftist opposition against the New World Order. The conference had been endorsed by a broad alliance of progressive and radical left political forces in Germany. It had been scheduled to take place at the University of Munich. However, under pressure from the state government, the university administration cancelled the counter-summit's permit at the last minute. As a result, the 2000 participants and dozens of international speakers from human rights groups, leftist research centers, community organizations, and liberation movements such as the FMLN of El Salvador, the Puerto Rican MLN, the Uruguayan Tupamaros and the Kurdish ERNK were scattered all over the city, conducting overcrowded meetings and workshops in a number of progressive

churches. Among the invited international representatives was former Black Panther and ex-political prisoner Dhoruba Bin Wahad of New York City, who was unable to attend because the U.S. government denied him his passport. Although Germany's liberal Green Party had originally endorsed the counter-summit, it withdrew its support a few weeks before the conference, and organized its own public forum in a local movie theatre, attracting only a few dozen researchers, activists and journalists.

The conference was interrupted for a large march one day before the G-7 leaders arrived. An estimated 20,000 people participated in a militant and spirited demonstration under the theme of "500 Years of Colonialism are 500 Years too many — Against the Master's World Order!" During the G-7 summit itself, Munich witnessed several more demonstrations of thousands of people, demanding freedom for political prisoners in Germany and worldwide, and protesting growing racism and state repression against refugees and immigrants in Germany. A militant women's march condemned sexist violence and racist population control policies against Third World peoples. On July 7, the second day of the summit, a 2000-strong march attempted to deliver a declaration to the U.S. Consulate in Munich, calling for the abolition of the death penalty and the release of political prisoners, specifically of Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal, two of the internationally most renowned political prisoners in the U.S. Not surprisingly, the consul was "unavailable".

Chancellor Kohl might have expected prosperous Munich to be the perfect site for a G-7 summit without street protests. However he did not take into account the old saying that "repression breeds resistance". ∞

A German comrade



"Freedom for Mumia Abu Jamal — an end to racism and death penalty in the U.S." Opening rally for the demo on July 8th, which was on the issue, "Freedom for all political prisoners worldwide". On the placards are Manuela Happe and Eva Haule, two prisoners from the RAF. (Both photos from Umbruch — Photoarchive, Berlin.)

Fight to free Peltier moves on

The long struggle to free Leonard Peltier is continuing in the United States, Canada, and Europe. For the first time since Leonard was imprisoned in 1976, the injustice in both Canada and the U.S. will be tabled at the federal appeals court this fall. An amicus brief, for the American Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals has been endorsed and signed by 50 members of Canada's parliament. The brief examines the false affidavits used by the FBI to obtain Peltier's extradition from Canada, and it includes proof of the Canadian government's complicity and cover-up. Its acceptance by U.S. courts is possibly the first time that Canadian MPs have formally intervened on behalf of a defendant in an American judicial proceeding.

U.S. Prosecutor Lynn Crooks submitted a counter-brief on behalf of the U.S. government asking the court not to accept the document. Appeals court judges, however, have

overruled and placed it on record. The brief on behalf of the Canadian M.P.s requests:

1. A new and fair trial for Leonard.
2. And/or that he be returned to Canada for new extradition hearing conducted fairly and truthfully.

In Canada, the legal defense of the LPDC (Canada) is evaluating new evidence obtained through the Canadian Freedom of Information Act since 1989 to determine whether they can renew the demand for an appeal of Peltier's extradition by taking it back to the Supreme Court of Canada. Further evidence — this time of Canadian government complicity and cover-up — would be put forward in an attempt to overturn Peltier's extradition back to the U.S. and seek his return to Canada for a new proceeding.

Peltier is waiting for a date for a hearing at the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals which

would determine whether he receives a hearing for a full examination of all evidence which would be put forward in a new trial. The grounds for seeking a new trial are:

1. The U.S. government's manipulation of the jury through tactics of fear and intimidation.
2. Government and FBI misconduct
3. Wrongful murder conviction.

The U.S. courts admitted in 1986 that Peltier did not shoot the agents. But in 1991, lower district courts ruled the three points as invalid. The upcoming hearing at the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals is an appeal of the lower court's decision.

In June 1992, the annual convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the main labour body in Canada with a membership of 2-1/2 million unionists, officially declared Peltier as the foremost issue of human rights abuse. They resolved to assist in the campaign for his freedom. Approval by this umbrella organization will make it easier for the case to be presented before the various unions and their locals which make up the CLC. This will help to develop a broader base

of public support for Peltier. At the convention, Ethel Pearson, Leonard's adopted mother and an elder of the Kwakiutl nation, presented an original oil painting by Leonard to Bob White, head of the CLC. Several thousand delegates provided Pearson and her delegation with several rousing standing ovations.

The LPDC (Canada) is requesting that letters be written to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Justice Minister Kim Campbell and local M.P.s asking that Canada support U.S. senators in their efforts to establish a full inquiry into the wrongdoings around the case. Demand that Canada also ask that Peltier be returned to Canada for a new extradition hearing, and that there be a full investigation into Canada's complicity in the illegal extradition.

No postage is required in Canada for writing to the House of Commons. Write:

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
Justice Minister Kim Campbell
and/or your local M.P.
at:

House of Commons
Ottawa, Ont K1A 0A6

The Litton action — ten years later

On October 14th, 1982, a powerful truck bomb exploded outside a Litton Systems plant in the north end of Toronto, injuring seven people and doing \$5 million damage. A few days later a communique was released from a group called Direct Action claiming responsibility. The communique apologized for the injuries, but expressed no regrets for the attack. It was an attempt to bring attention to Litton's role in building the guidance system for the Cruise Missile, a first-strike weapon which threatened the precarious balance of terror that existed between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

A few months earlier, another Direct Action bombing completely destroyed a nearly completed B.C. Hydro substation which was part of an electrical grid that was to connect the British Columbia mainland with Vancouver Island, a project opposed by local residents as being the beginning of devastating industrial development in this wilderness area. A month later, three outlets of Red Hot Video were firebombed by a group calling themselves The Wimmen's Fire Brigade. This rapidly expanding chain specialized in violent porn videos including the "snuff" type. Local women had begun to organize opposition to this exploitation, but the chain had continued to grow and prosper. The firebombings, while igniting a huge debate about exploitation, violence against women, and censorship, were broadly supported by the Vancouver women's community.

In January of 1983, Ann Hansen, Brent Taylor, Doug Stewart, Julie Belmas and Gerry Hannah were arrested in British Columbia and charged with these actions as well as conspiracy to rob a Brinks truck, weapons offenses and other, relatively minor, criminal charges. In Toronto, the offices of a peace group that was organizing a campaign against Litton were searched by the local police along with the homes of some of its leading members. In Vancouver, shortly after the arrests, four houses of people doing support work for the Vancouver 5, as they came to be called, were searched.

The trial

In June of 1983, Bulldozer was also raided. Virtually everything associated with *Bulldozer* (the magazine) was confiscated including an issue in production. We were threatened with a charge of seditious libel, which apparently meant that we were calling for the armed overthrow of the state. Though nothing ever came of that, Colleen Crosbie, a midwife living with us, was charged with procuring an abortion. Information to lay the charge had come to the attention of the police from wire taps and room bugs to which we were subjected. Crosbie was offered a deal where the charge would not be pressed if she told all that she knew about Bulldozer's connection to the bombing. Her non-cooperation took us into a legal fight costing thousands of dollars. Eventually all the charges Crosbie faced were dropped.

In June of 1984, the first of four scheduled trials was coming to a close. The defense had lost a bid to throw out hundreds of hours of tape recordings made by room bugs, and all five defendants copped pleas. They received what were considered by many to be unduly harsh sentences. Hansen got life, Taylor was given 22 years, Belmas, only 20 when the bombings occurred, received a 20-year sentence. Hannah got ten years and Stewart six, the sentences of the latter two reflecting the fact that neither of them were linked to the Litton action. (Julie Belmas eventually broke rank. She testified against Taylor and Hansen at her appeal, sabotaging their appeals, in exchange for a 5-year reduction in her sentence. All contact was broken off with her by the other four and their supporters.)

All five have now been released from prison, with Hansen and Taylor having served about 7 years, including pre-trial detention, before receiving day parole. We honour the Five for their courage and feel that they made

an invaluable contribution to the struggle in Canada even if the proof of such a contribution must remain subjective. This chapter in the history of Canadian anarchism has come to a close. But the personal sacrifices made by these comrades surely demand that we re-examine these events in order to learn from that experience. Though we will draw out some of the mistakes we feel were made by Direct Action and their supporters, our intention is not to trash anyone.

Direct Action was technically competent, as the two \$5 million bombings would suggest. And politically they were very developed. The communique, an essay really, released after the Litton action is as relevant today as when it was written. The issues that the Five addressed in their armed actions and in their broader politics: the native struggle, violence against women, destruction of the earth from unchecked industrialism, prisons, imperialism, nuclear and non-nuclear war, are more critical today than ever before. The actions and trial in Vancouver did provide an opportunity to discuss these issues in other political circles.

The injuries of seven people in the Litton bombing, the majority of whom were plant workers, gave a negative cast to the bombing. Direct Action apologized for the injuries and explained their error as believing in the image of cops and security guards as superheroes. They had placed themselves at risk of arrest to ensure that the workers be given sufficient warning. But three security guards at the main gate failed to notice the van being driven and parked 100 yards from their glass-encased booth. Security also failed to understand the warning called in at that time. They called the cops but did not begin to evacuate the factory. It took the police ten minutes to arrive on the scene, and the bomb exploded 12 minutes early, probably due to police radios, just as people were leaving the endangered areas. The interference of police radios with the

remote detonator could probably have been foreseen and prevented.

The size of the bomb itself was questioned by Doug Stewart, writing in *Open Road* after their conviction. He suggested that medium-level attacks such as arson and mechanical sabotage are easier to do than bombings. And large-scale actions virtually demand that the guerrillas go underground. Direct Action understood that they had to break off contact with other political people; that to do actions in one city, they should live in another. But this demands enormous emotional and personal sacrifices. Indeed it was the failure to completely cut off ties with friends and lovers that left a trail for the local police. Smaller actions are technically sim-

The right to a fair trial must not be ignored, if the battle is going to be fought on the legal terrain at all. But it is the state's battleground, and their first weapon is criminalization.

pler and allow, as Stewart says, "a group to come together easily and quickly around a particular issue." Medium-level activity also "has a much less intense impact on one's personal life. If you are not underground, you are less emotionally isolated, and the overall stress level is very much lower. Capture for a medium-level action would be much less devastating in every way. A two or three year sentence is no joke, but it is substantially easier to deal with than a ten or twenty year one."

There was also a romanticization of guerrilla politics shared by both Direct Action and their supporters that undercut our ability to respond to the arrests. Direct Action never planned on what would happen if they got arrested. Nor had the milieu out of which they had arisen seriously thought through how we would handle a political trial, even though we covered armed resistance in the

U.S. and Europe in our newspapers and at least talked of the possibility of it happening in Canada. "Romantic" is used in the sense that it is one thing to imagine going down in a hail of police bullets. It is something else to sit in some detention centre, facing many years in prison, trying to figure out a trial strategy. Similarly, for those of us on the outside, it is straightforward to reprint communiques from underground comrades. But it is much more difficult to handle raids and lawyers, harassing arrests, and watch other friends and comrades distance themselves just when support and work is needed the most. One must be able to handle high-stress politics for what could be a period of years, while advancing politics that may not even be supported by one's own friends and political associates, let alone the wider society.

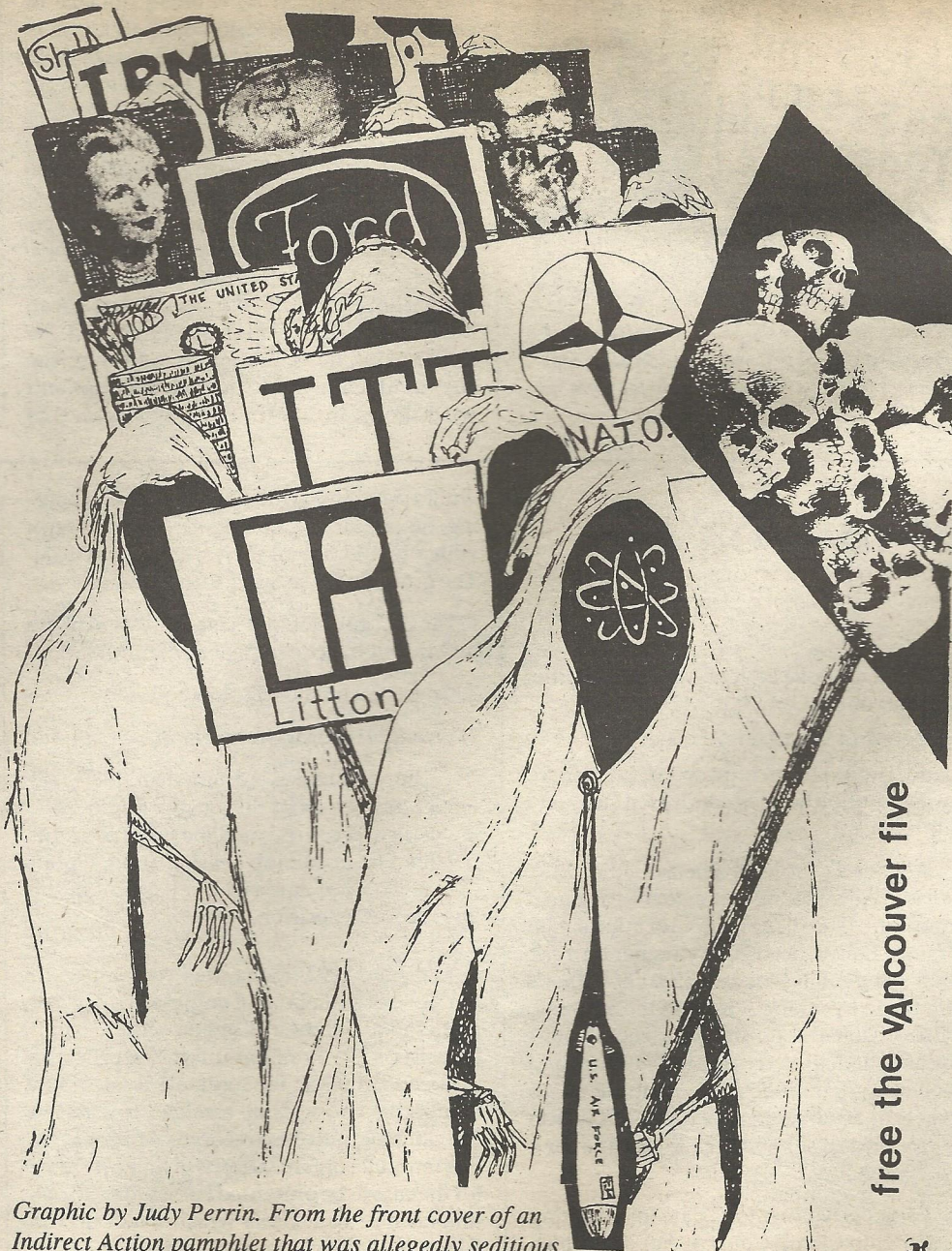
In the initial confusion, the right to a fair trial became the main demand. Since it did seem possible that the room bugs which provided the main body of evidence might be thrown out, this strictly legal course was hard to resist without prior political clarity as to how trials should be conducted. The right to a fair trial must not be ignored, if the battle is going to be fought on the legal terrain at all. But it is the state's battleground, and their first weapon is criminalization. The Crown (prosecution) split the indictments into four trials, the first of which was on the least overtly political charges; weapons offenses and the conspiracy to rob a Brinks truck. While it may be obvious to those who have a certain political understanding why guerrillas need weapons and money, television pictures of a desktop full of weapons, and reports of meticulous planning for a raid on a Brinks truck, were calculated to defuse claims that the Five were principled political activists. The fight for a fair trial did draw support from activists, progressive journalists and lawyers and people concerned with human rights. But it does create real problems if the trial is made to appear legally "fair". Or when, as happened, the Five eventually pled guilty. Some people who did support work felt manipulated into supporting "guilty" people even though we tried to make it clear that there is a difference between pleading not guilty and being "innocent".

The situation was not entirely grim, however. The members of Direct Action were all respected activists known for their militancy. Though this meant that the political police (and a lot of other people) had a good idea as to who the bombers were right from the beginning it also meant that the efforts to portray them as terrorists did not entirely succeed. In spite of protests from the lawyers, the Five gave interviews and statements that defended the politics behind the actions. While one of the support groups in Vancouver did push the "right to a fair trial" strategy exclusively, the Free the Five Defense Group built support on the basis of resistance to the corporate state and their way of doing things. There was a show of support in the courtroom and outside the court house.

Community support

Direct Action had developed out of specific political communities and these communities stuck with them. A number of newspapers directly associated with these anarchist-resistance politics, and information on the case put out by the support committees in various cities, did reach beyond our own circles. Other alternative papers offered sympathetic coverage, though some anarchist papers were hostile at first. (The "socialist" left ignored the whole affair.) The women's community in Vancouver was particularly supportive. The circles immediately around the Five were primarily women, with a number of them later moving to Toronto where they have been one of the cores of a large anti-authoritarian women's/lesbian community.

In Toronto, support for the Five came from some of the pacifists who had been campaigning against Litton, though most tried to distance themselves as much as possible. After the raid on Bulldozer, our support came from our native comrades, in particular the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, and lesbians who could relate to the social and psychological marginalization that is one of the main goals of such raids. The midwives



Graphic by Judy Perrin. From the front cover of an *Indirect Action* pamphlet that was allegedly seditious.

free the vancouver five

and pro-choice movement were also supportive even though both were engaged in their own struggles for political legitimacy.

Generally, the response in Toronto was contradictory. While there was little overt support for armed resistance, there was political sympathy and personal support. Whether more political support could have been mobilized is an open question. Many political people upon first hearing of the bombing had a very positive response — they identified emotionally with this blow against the Empire. But then this supportive gut-reaction was soon replaced by an intellectual distancing from the implications of such a response. A campaign to build support for resistance politics amongst the activist communities would have had to counter the critiques of armed actions while at the same time building on the initial positive response.

Isolation

There was a choice as to whether there would be a trial in Toronto for the Litton bombing. But the small anarchist community of which Bulldozer was a part was new to Toronto. In our relative isolation it was difficult to imagine taking on what would have to be a major effort to present the politics behind the bombing through a hostile mass media. Yet not doing so meant that there was never a longer-term focus nor sense of direction for those who might have been willing to come forward with more active support.

Overt political actions such as these bombings, known as propaganda by deed, are not understood in a non-political society. Major bombings are simply one more spectacular act in a world considered to be increasingly mad. Even though few people will understand the motivations behind the attack, the positive side is that there won't necessarily be a major reaction against it either. Indeed, it is an error to think that something like the Litton bombing will be a "wake-up" call for the people to do something about a critical situation facing them. But properly explained it can make a difference to those people who are already concerned about the situation and who have become frustrated with other methods of dealing with the issue.

Guerrilla actions are not an end in themselves; that is, a single act, or even a coordinated series of actions, has little likelihood of achieving little more than some immediate goal. Such actions are problematic if it is assumed that they can be substituted for

above ground work. But if they can be situated within a broader politics, one tactic amongst many, then they can give the above ground movements more room to maneuver, making them both more visible and more credible. At the same time, activists are given a psychological lift, a sense of victory, regardless of how fleeting, so that they go about their own political work with a renewed enthusiasm.

There are different ways to determine whether Direct Action's armed resistance has had an impact on the politics of the country. The first, of course, would be whether or not militant tactics have continued to be used. In Ontario, the answer is no, although the Animal Liberation Front did do some actions in the mid-eighties. In British Columbia, however, over the last two years there has been a great deal of ecotage (ecological sabotage) against the logging of some of the last wilderness areas. Though these tactics were initially developed in the U.S., Direct Action has been one of the sources of inspiration.

The second criteria is whether or not the politics expressed by the guerrillas have been perpetuated. A relatively small, but very active milieu of young activists adopted many of the politics around Direct Action and developed them through such projects as Reality Now, the Anarchist Black Cross and Ecomedia. They were also instrumental in

working in the peace, punk and native support movements, helping to ensure that such politics did not end when the Five went to prison. Repression is most effective when it is able to keep the radical ideas from being transmitted to a new generation of activists. If the ideas can be passed on, then the next wave of activists develop their politics from the base that has already been created. Nor do the inter-generational politics just flow one way. Bulldozer itself owes our continued existence to the energy and enthusiasm of these younger anarchists. We were brought out of a period of burnout, despair and inactivity after the trials by those who passionately raged at injustice, who could still feel that through our activity we can make a difference. We relearned much that we had forgotten.

For most North American activists, armed struggle is reduced to a moral question: "Should we, or should we not use violent means to advance the struggle?" Though this is relevant on a personal level, it only confuses what is really a political question. Most radicals, at this point in time anyway, are not going to become involved directly in armed attacks. But as resistance movements develop in North America — and they had better or we are all lost — it is inevitable that armed actions will be undertaken by some. The question remains if these armed actions will be accepted as part of the spectrum of

necessary activity. Much will depend on whether people suffer harm or injuries. Far from being "terroristic", the history of armed struggle in North America shows that the guerrillas have been quite careful in selecting their targets. There is a major difference between bombing military or corporate targets, or even assassinating police in response to their use of violence, and setting off bombs on crowded city streets. The left in North America has never used random acts of terror against the general population. To denounce any who would choose to act outside of the narrowly defined limits of "peaceful protest" in order to appear morally superior, or to

supposedly avoid alienating people, is to give the state the right to determine what are the allowable limits of protest.

The Litton bombing was by no means politically definitive either at the time it took place, or now. But it is not entirely coincidental that ten years after the Litton bombing, the radical political communities and movements in Toronto are much larger today than they were then. The ideas that were being advanced by the five and their supporters are now shared by much wider elements of the

Overt political actions such as these bombings, known as propaganda by deed, are not understood in a non-political society.

independent and anti-authoritarian left. It is not that we "won" people over to our political line. But we have contributed a critique of North American society that others have found useful. In turn, we have learned from many other movements, perspectives and peoples.

Canada is a much more profoundly politicized society now than it was ten years ago. There are many different reasons for this political development. In particular, the armed self-defense of Mohawk land in 1990 and the massacre of 14 women by a man "hunting" feminists in Montreal in 1989 resulted in an understanding that social conflict cannot be contained within the limits of parliamentary politics. The iron fist of reaction has been exposed even as the necessity of radical change becomes ever more apparent. Our voice has been one among many which have aided in the development of this more radical understanding of Canadian society. The bombings ten years ago were a challenge for radicals and activists to get down and bring about the changes we know must take place in Canada. Since that time, the global situation has only become more critical. Even if we choose not to use the same tactics as Direct Action, their courage to act surely demands that we refuse to compromise our efforts. ∞

Jim Campbell



Update on League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners

As many of you already know, the League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners (LLGP), is working to organize prisoner participation in the April, 1993 Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender March in Washington, D.C. The planners of the March hope to bring over a million queer people to our nation's capital to speak out for equal rights and liberation, and we in the LLGP believe that it is important that the voices and concerns of prisoners be a part of this historic event.

Toward that goal, we are proposing a "proxy participation project". The basic idea is very simple. We want to match up prisoners who are interested in being included in the March with Lesbians and Gay men on the street who are willing to serve as "proxies". What that means is that the proxy will stand in for the prisoner at the March (and also, possibly, in group meetings, planning sessions, etc.) The proxy will wear an i.d. bracelet engraved with the prisoner's name, similar to the POW bracelets of the Vietnam War. By writing letters, sending pictures, etc. the proxy will help the prisoner feel involved in the March, but even more importantly, the proxy will provide a conduit for the prisoner's ideas, concerns, needs, etc., carrying our voices to Washington D.C. so that we, too, will be represented.

I know that April seems far away, but it isn't. Right now the groundwork is being laid

and the infrastructure built which will make an undertaking as large as the March possible; and now is the time we must become involved and put our plans into motion if we hope to contribute.

Almost every day, I get letters from prisoners all over the country asking for more information and wanting to know how they can be included in the March. And wherever our project has been presented to the outside community it has met with overwhelming sympathy and encouragement. Now we must begin to pull this support together.

For those of us "inside", there is a lot we can do. First I need your names so that I can put together a definitive list of all the interested prisoners. Second, we need your ideas, concerns, issues, etc. What messages do you want your proxies to carry to our community and to Washington D.C.?

Beyond that, you can help with outreach. Tell your friends, lovers and family members to get involved. Write letters to your local Lesbian and Gay newspapers telling them about the proxy project and reminding people that prisoners want to be part of the March too. Find out who is involved with organizing the March in your area and write to them. And, of course, let us know who you're in contact with and what sort of response you've received.

Now for those of you on the "outside". (You didn't think I forgot you, did you?) We need volunteers to work specifically on the Proxy Project committee. We need donations for posters, fliers, postage, etc. We need people to help us co-ordinate prisoners with proxies. Also, we don't yet have a source for our bracelets — so if any of you know a business that might be willing to donate or give us a good break, by all means put us in touch!

Most of all, we need proxies. So those of you who are planning to go to the March (or those of you who were leaning toward it and looking for an excuse to say "Yes") volunteer. Double the significance of your involvement by marching for two and make it possible for someone to be included who otherwise would be left out.

The Prisoners Proxy Project was adopted at the Northwest Regional Meeting for the March in July, 1992. They are in the process of developing a demands/purpose statement to take to the National Planning Meeting in October. Those of you who live in other regions, find out when the next planning session is in your area and try to attend. Push the Proxy Project and prisoner participation. Remember, if we can get our project adopted as part of the official agenda then half our work is finished.

Forward to D.C. in '93

Lin Elliot
Co-director
League For Lesbian and Gay Prisoners
1202 E. Pike St. Ste #1044
Seattle, WA 98122-3934

Quebecois

con't from page 12

...When I refer to being underground, I refer to a period of activity from late 1974 to late 1984 when I took my political work away from the eyes and ears of the government. During those years I joined efforts with others in attempting to build a revolutionary resistance movement. We sought to bring to the attention of the American people the horrendous crimes being committed by their own government and transnational corporations. ... after my capture I was convicted of bombing U.S. military facilities, offices of the South African government, and corporations doing business with apartheid. Now I am one of over one hundred political prisoners held in the U.S. gulag.

I wholeheartedly support the effort of those who nourish and preserve the French Canadian culture and heritage, including our language. There are obstacles to be sure ... we should never resort to racism to persevere. It is with anger and sadness I note Quebec's use of the Surete du Quebec to attack the indigenous Mohawk people who are defending their land against encroachment by non-native land developers. ∞

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